THE

WOMEN OF TURKEY 000

AND THEIR FOLK-LORE

BY

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WITH CONCLUDING CHAPTERS ON

THE ORIGINS OF MATRIARCHY

BY

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Αἱ Γυναῖκες . . . μάλιστα τὴν ἀρχαίαν φωνὴν σώζουσι.
PLATO, Κρατ. 74.

Facilius enim Mulieres incorruptam antiquitatem conservant.
CICERO, *De Orat.* iii. 12.

[Title Page]

THE JEWISH AND MOSLEM WOMEN

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CHAPTER VIII.

ALBANIAN WOMEN: THEIR STATUS AND OCCUPATIONS.

121 As the character of a people is generally so much
influenced by the nature of the country they inhabit,
a brief description of the division of Turkey occupied
by the Albanians may give greater interest to my
101 remarks on this race. Albania, as its native name of
Skiperi, "The Land of Rocks," signifies, is one of the
most mountainous divisions of Turkey. The principal
133 chain runs north and south, parallel with the Adriatic,
and from it jut many spurs, composed of mountains
as lofty as the main range, which ramify in every
direction, so that almost the whole surface of the
country is covered with rugged hills and deep valleys,
save near the mouth of the river Ergenth. Even the
coast is grandly mountainous, the spurs there often
terminating in abrupt precipices, the sides of which
are eternally beaten by the lashing waves.

132 Almost every variety of climate is found within
the limits of Albania. In the south, and near the
coast, the temperature is as mild as at Naples, and
oranges, citrons, grapes, pomegranates, figs, and other
fruits grow in abundance. But the cold increases
with the distance from the sea, and only twenty
miles from the Adriatic the snowfalls are heavy, and
[137] the frosts severe. The higher and more northern

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summits are clad in eternal snows, but at lower eleva- 137
tions stretch vast forests of pine and other trees, and
rich pasturages on which the sheep and cattle of the 233
Ghegs roam in summer. The land is cultivated to
any considerable extent only in the south, where the 311
climate is more suited to the production of crops, and
the character of the people to the pursuit of agri-
culture.

Albania is divided into two *vilayets*, or provinces, 631
called after the names of their chief towns, Scutari and 101
Ioannina, the residences of the Ottoman Governors.
The former, which is also called Northern Albania, is
inhabited chiefly by the Ghegs and Miridites, and the
latter by the Tosks, Khams, and Liaps, all of whom,
however, are proud to call themselves by the national
name of Skipetar.

Though nominally brought under the Turkish yoke 175
and partially converted to Islam in the fifteenth century, after an heroic struggle of twenty-five years' duration under the famous Skanderbeg,[1] the Albanians long maintained a sort of semi-independence. As Moslems, they fought under their own leaders in the armies of the Sultans, who esteemed them among their bravest soldiers, and rewarded their services with numerous privileges and grants of property. The warlike Albanians were consequently never in spirit a conquered race, and the old feudal social system, which they were still able to maintain, aided by the nature of their country, made it occasionally possible for the chieftains to throw off, for a time at least, the authority of the Sublime Porte. The most

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[1] "*Iskender Bey*, the Lord Alexander."

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

175 famous of these chieftains were Kara Mohammed of Scutari, and Ali Pasha of Ioannina. The former, at the end of the last century, aimed at an independent sovereignty, which his son, Mustapha Pasha, asserted
175 in open rebellion in 1831; and the latter, notwith-
669 standing the frightful cruelties of which he was guilty, still lives in tale and song as the mighty upholder of Albanian independence against Ottoman tyranny. Subsequent risings have, however, resulted only in the death or banishment of the most influential members of leading families, the last *coup d'état* of this description having been carried out at Prisrend and
[423] Uskup in 1881. The great landholders are now all Moslems, the property of which the Christian proprietors were despoiled at the end of last century by Ali Pasha having, on his death, been appropriated by the Sultan.

671 But, whether Christian or Moslem, each section of the Albanian nation has its own traditional laws and usages by which their social life is alone regulated. The Miridites claim to have received theirs from the Dukadjini princes, who, according to them, were the ancestors of their own chieftains. Their internal
642 government is a species of aristocratic republic, all
623 matters affecting the community being decided in council by the chiefs, the elders, and other hereditary functionaries.

342 The dwellings of the Albanians are quite in keeping with the character and mode of life of their occupants. Even at Ioannina, where the customs more closely approximate to those of the Greeks, the houses have a gloomy appearance from without, being shut in by

big courtyard gates, and having no windows to the 342
street on the ground floor. Like all Oriental houses,
they are only of two stories; the upper, which contains
the living rooms of the family, being reached
by an outside wooden staircase under cover of the
broad pent of the roof projecting over the landing or
gallery on which all the rooms open.

In more remote towns, such as Prisrend or Skodra, 363
the streets look dreary and deserted in the extreme,
besides being extremely narrow and ill-paved, if paved
at all, and the bazaars and shops are exceedingly 347
mean and poor. The furniture consists chiefly of a 352
low divan with very hard cushions, a few chairs and
a mirror, and the lime-washed walls are sometimes
decorated with a dado representing a landscape, executed
in the crudest possible style chiefly in one
colour. A shelf often runs round the walls to hold 353
the copper *ibriks* and other utensils, and above it are 415
hung the rich assortment of arms which is the pride 411
of every family.

In the mountain districts the houses of the beys 342
are complete fortresses, being surrounded by high 711
walls pierced with loopholes for musketry. Only in
times of open hostility, however, is it necessary to
take any precautions against possible foes, for an
Albanian's notion of honour does not allow him to 181
slay a man in his own house, deadly as may be his 577
feud with him. The villages of these districts are 361
generally remote from each other, perched in high
and inaccessible situations. The furniture of the 352
cottages is limited to a few mats and rugs, a *sofra*,
the low stand on which meals are served in Turkish

352 fashion, a well-scoured copper pan to mix the meal in,
[415 a wooden bowl or two, a few horn spoons, a copper
373 *ibrik*, or coffee pot, and a brass lamp. One of the two
412] rooms is used as a storehouse for the maize or grapes,
251 which are spread out and sprinkled with salt in order to
353 preserve them. The other serves as general living and
372 sleeping apartment, where the fire is made on the
floor, the smoke escaping through a hole in the roof.
241 Each house has its garden well stocked with fruit
249 and vegetables, and its tobacco plot, surrounded by a
high loopholed wall. Each village has, too, its green,
361 in one corner of which is the paved threshing-floor,
243 where the grain is trodden out by horses.

142 The physical appearance of the women of Albania varies according to the district they inhabit, the tribe to which they belong, and the conditions under which they live. The Skipetars of the Drin and the Gheg and Miridite women of North Albania generally are tall, handsome, and well-made, having good complexions and not infrequently fair hair, which, as the following verse from one of their folk-songs shows, is much admired:—

[539]

O maiden so tender,
No pipe of Vizier
Was ever so slender
As thou art, my dear!
The soft silken tresses
Of thy yellow hair,
The glad breeze caresses,
Like flax threads are fair.

183 They are also dignified in demeanour, capable of undergoing fatigue and hardship, and exceedingly courageous.

courageous. The Tosks are blue-eyed, and also have 142
frequently blonde or chestnut hair. Their features are
refined, and they are extremely elegant in figure and
deportment. The Khams resemble the Greeks somewhat
what in feature. They have black eyes and hair, and
darker skins than the Ghegs. The Liaps are the [462]
least handsome of all the Albanian women, and the
laborious out-of-door life they lead, surrounded by
privations of all kinds, soon destroys any degree of
beauty they may have possessed in youth. They 481
are, however, expert swimmers and divers, this pastime
time affording almost their only distraction.

The national costumes of the Albanians are ex- 291
tremely varied and picturesque, and are still rigidly
adhered to by all classes. The dress of a Skipetar
lady is extremely rich and costly. It consists of a
sleeved gown of striped white gauze; a pair of very
full Turkish trousers drawn in at the ankle, where
they are finished off with a revers of thick embroidery;
a long sash, also of gauze; a sleeveless vest, and a coat
reaching to the knees, both of crimson velvet, handsomely
somely trimmed round the borders with elaborate
gold embroidery. The hair is separated into three [302]
tresses, one of which floats on the shoulders, the other
two being twisted round the little red fez which is
worn on the head, and kept in place by a kerchief
of silk. The dark-blue fez-tassel, which is very full
and long, is ornamented with tiny plates of gold or
with seed-pearls, and droops on the left shoulder.
Formerly the Moslem women went barefoot, but they
now wear embroidered slippers in the house and
yellow *babouches* out of doors. The Miridite women

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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291 wear a coat of thick white woollen stuff, red trousers,
an embroidered apron with fringe half a yard long,
and on the head a blue kerchief. The dress of the
Christians is similar in form but usually of a violet
colour. The *yashmak* and *feridgé* (veil and cloak) of
[563] the Turkish women is worn out of doors by the
[562] Moslem women in the towns, and also, if they live in
close proximity to Moslems, by the Christian women.
The cloak of the latter is, however, of a different shape
and of a light red colour, with a cross embroidered in
front. This distinctive dress is said to have been
imposed by a native pasha, who, being attracted by a
Christian girl, not knowing her to be such, asked her
in marriage and was refused.

The country women, however, both of mountain
and plain, and whether Christian or Moslem, go about
unveiled. Their costumes vary extremely in detail,
but are generally of stout homespun and felt, and in
[171] form resemble those of the Greek and Bulgarian
peasants of Macedonia, the leading features of which
are two aprons worn under a coat. In the villages
of the plains, however, a blue petticoat, trimmed
[531] with red bands, is worn over an embroidered linen
gown, with a bodice of white cloth embroidered in
black.

302 Albanian ladies appear to be even more addicted
than Osmanlis to the use of cosmetics. No sooner
are they married than they begin to dye their hair
[303] with a decoction made from gall-nuts and palm oil,
paint their eyelashes, and extend their eyebrows till
they meet over the nose. For their skins they use
a "wash" in which various deleterious ingredients

enter, redden their lips and cheeks with iris powder 302
or carmine, and stain their nails and the palms of their hands with henna.

The social status of the Albanian women varies 562
according to district and creed. The Liaps and the Christians of Southern Albania and Epirus generally occupy the least enviable position, all the hard out- [462]
of-door work devolving upon them. The Northern Albanians and also the Tosks, on the other hand, treat their wives with much greater consideration, consult them willingly in their affairs, both public and private, and accord them a position in the family almost equal to their own. And well do they merit the respect of their husbands and brothers. For often have they proved themselves to be fit companions for men, unmindful of fatigue, danger, and even death in the cause of liberty. When the armies of the Sultan menaced the privileges of which the people of Scutari had always been proud, it was the women who were the first to give the alarm and to excite the men to resist to the death, themselves following to aid in the combat. [703]
Restraining the tears natural to their sex, they would carry the mutilated bodies of their loved ones among the combatants in order to excite them to avenge their deaths. And the same women are said to have refused to receive back into their homes the husbands and sons who had for a moment turned their backs upon the enemy.

Albanian women, too, are often entrusted with 562
negotiations for truce or peace. Such is the respect 628
with which Albanians regard their women that they 728

562 may traverse the camps of belligerents with greater
628 safety than men. The terms of treaties of peace, too,
728 are often discussed by the women belonging to the hostile parties in the privacy of the harems of the chieftains. More ready, however, as a rule, are they to espouse and take part in the quarrels of their male relatives than to act as peacemakers, and, owing to their practice of carrying arms, they are always ready for a fray. Miss Mackenzie relates that, when traversing the Pass of Katchanik, her attention was directed by her escort to two Albanian women whom they chanced to meet. "Look at them," he cried, "they are women worth looking at, for well do they know how to handle a gun!"

"Are they Moslems?" asked the traveller.

"Assuredly."

"But they do not wear the yashmak."

"Not they, indeed," was the reply. "They have never worn it, and why should they? for they are fiercer and more unapproachable than men."[1]

159 Such being the character of the Albanian women,
175 it is not surprising that they have played a con-
562 siderable part in the history of their country. It was, indeed, to the indomitable energy and courageous spirit of his mother, Khamko, that Ali Pasha, the "Lion of Ioannina," owed the earlier successes that paved the way for his subsequent brilliant career. Ali, who had during his father's lifetime been a wild and intractable boy, appears at his death to have submitted with the utmost docility to the authority of his mother. This lady, who was the daughter of a

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[1] *Through Macedonia to the Albanian Lakes.*

Bey of Konitza, and connected with some of the best 159
Tosk families, had not, until the death of her husband 175
placed the responsibility for the well-being of the 562
family in her hands, given any signs of the extraordinary strength of character and readiness of resource which afterwards distinguished her, qualities which were, however, sullied by an implacability of soul which only too nearly resembled that displayed by Olympias, the mother of Alexander, herself a native of Epirus.

"To my mother," said the tyrant of Ioannina on one occasion to the French Consul-General—"to my mother I owe everything, for my father left me but a mere hole (τρίνα) and a few fields. My imagination, fired by the counsels of her who had twice given me birth—for she has made me both a *man* and a *vizier*
—revealed to me the secret of my destiny."[1] The 159
hereditary enemies of the family having at once taken 175
advantage of its head being a minor, by seizing upon 562
some of his lands, Khamko suddenly exchanged the 628
distaff for the sword, and gathering round her the partisans of her house, and those among her late husband's vassals who still remained faithful, tried in various skirmishes her strength against that of the enemies of her family. In these raids she was accompanied by her young son, to whom she pointed out the lands of which he had been despoiled, and the estates of the despoilers. Braving every danger, the *Aghadina*, as Khamko was called by her followers, continued to harass her enemies by open hostility or secret intrigue until she was finally taken in an

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[1] See pp. 245 and 319, *Fate.*

159 ambuscade by the men of Gardiki and Tchormovo,
175 together with Ali and her only daughter, Shainitza.
562 After having been subjected to every indignity and
628 outrage by their captors, Khamko and her children had
the good fortune to be ransomed by the generosity of a
Greek merchant for the sum of 22,800 piastres (£3700).

Hatred of those who had thus humiliated her took entire possession of the Aghadina's soul, and her one idea thenceforward was to train up her son as the avenger of her wrongs. With this object she commenced to instil into his mind those pernicious principles which he was only too well disposed to receive, and which may be summed up in the words [577] *Might is right*, an adage sufficiently popular among the turbulent Albanian clans. Ali's first attempt to vindicate his rights in the field was a complete failure. Having met with a more vigorous resistance than he expected, he fled from the fight, and was one of the first to re-enter Tepeleni. Khamko, furious at finding all her hopes blasted by what she deemed his cowardice, loaded him with reproaches, and thrusting her distaff into his hand, added, "Go, coward, and spin with the women in the harem; thou art fitter for that than for the career of arms!" Ali's fortunes indeed fluctuated for some time between success and failure. While he was absent on a campaign, Khamko found herself on her death-bed, and, though repeated and urgent messages were despatched to him, she died before he could arrive. The Aghadina in her will bequeathed to her son and daughter the task of immo-[789] lating to her *manes* the inhabitants of Gardiki and Tchormovo, at whose hands they had suffered such

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unpardonable indignities, and over her dead body 175
the brother and sister swore to utterly exterminate 562
her enemies. 628

Some years later Shainitza was grieving for the 788
death of her favourite son, Aden Bey. So wild was 159
her sorrow that she smashed with a hammer all his and 175
her own diamond ornaments, burnt all her cashmeres 152
and valuable furs, and forced his young widow to lie
on straw mats spread on the ground instead of on a
bed. The mirrors and ornaments of her serail were
also destroyed, its windows were by her order painted
black,[1] and everything which in any way recalled
joy or happiness was banished from the palace.
Roused from this abandonment of grief by the news
of the fall of Gardiki,[2] she wrote to Ali reminding [788]
him of the oath they had sworn together over their
mother's corpse, and of her wrongs and theirs, and
urged him to have no mercy on the inhabitants of
that town. "As for me," she added in conclusion,
"it is only on cushions stuffed with the hair of the
women of Gardiki that Shainitza will henceforward
repose!"

Faithfully was the terrible oath, sworn to the dead, 175
kept both by brother and sister. The chief men of 159
Gardiki, to the number of some three hundred, in- 669
duced by fair promises to meet Ali at the Khan of
Valieré, were there ruthlessly massacred by the
Christian troops under his Greek lieutenant, Thanasé

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[1] See p. 265; and compare similar custom in folk-tale, p. 315.

[2] In 1802. A Greek folk-song graphically describes the gallant defence made by this town, which was taken by one of Ali's lieutenants, "Yousóuf the Arab" (*Greek Folk-songs*, p. 234).

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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175 Vaghia,[1] not one escaping. Shainitza caused the town
159 to be razed to the ground, and, after cutting off the
[669] hair of the women with every insult which she could
heap upon them, this tigress in human form drove
them forth with their children to the mountains,
menacing any with a like doom who should venture
to give food or shelter to the objects of her wrath.
The traveller passing through the valley of Drynopolis
may to this day see in the wall of the khan the tablet
which records, in letters of gold, the number of the
dead and the date of their sacrifice to the *manes* of
the mother and the fury of the sister of the Vizier of
Ioannina.

[428] In a codicil to her will, Khamko directed that a
hadji, or pilgrim, should be despatched on her part to
lay offerings on the tomb of the Prophet, and pray
788 there for the repose of her soul. Such pilgrimages
and offerings may, however, only be made when the
expenses are defrayed with money lawfully and
honestly acquired. And as it was found on inquiry
into the estate of the late Veli Bey, Ali's ancestor,
that the property to be sold for this purpose had been
175 taken by force or fraud from a Christian, the pilgrimage
159 was disallowed by the religious authorities.

562 Such extreme ferocity of disposition as that manifested
[152] by Khamko and Shainitza is, however, exceptional
among Albanian women, and even in Ali Pasha's

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[1] The Greek poet, Aristotle Valaorites, has made Thanasé Vaghia the subject of one of his most striking poems, Ὁ βρυκόλακας, "The Vampire," a translation of which may be found in my *Greek Folk-songs*, p. 121. The tragedy of Ἡ κυρὰ φροσύνη, "The Lady Phrosyne," by the same writer, part of which I saw acted in an open-air theatre at Salonica, gives a vivid picture of Ali Pasha and his Court.

own household was one whose character stands out in 175 striking contrast to theirs. This was the Vizier's 159 favourite wife, Emineh, the daughter of the Pasha of 562 Delvino, a chieftain whose ruthless cruelty had gained for him the surname of the Tiger, but who had fallen a victim to Ali's ambition. In the dirges sung by the Liaps on the death of her husband, Emineh is described as "the gentle hind of Mount Pelagos," and her sympathy for the victims of the Vizier's rancour brought about her untimely and tragical end.

When the news arrived at Ioannina of the fall of Souli, Emineh, touched with the story of their heroism, fell at the Vizier's feet and implored his clemency on their behalf. "O Effendi!" she cried, clasping his knees, "deign to listen to thy most devoted slave, and be not insensible to her tears! Your Fate has warned me in a dream that it will be well for you if you spare the Souliotes!"

"The *Souliotes!*" exclaimed the Vizier, in a voice of thunder—"the *Souliotes!* Darest thou intercede for my worst enemies and not tremble for thyself?"

"Effendi," replied the brave woman, rising with dignified firmness—"Effendi, remember that I am the daughter of a Pasha. Yes, I dare intercede for them, and, moreover, dare to tell thee that their blood, and the blood of my unhappy father, which thou hast shed whilst I was yet a child, will be upon thy head!"

"And upon thine also," replied the Vizier, beside himself with fury. Drawing from his girdle a pistol, he discharged it at his wife, who, falling in a swoon, was carried by her slaves into the haremlik. Ali, think-

159 175 562 ing he had killed her, and overcome with grief and remorse, shut himself up in his most private apartments until he was informed by his physician that Emineh was not even wounded, but had merely fainted from emotion. His mind thus relieved, Ali shed tears, and, with all his tenderness for his favourite wife revived, proceeded to her apartment. Admittance being from fear refused him, he entered the chamber by force. The noise, however, and the sight of the tyrant, gave to the tender Emineh a shock which proved fatal, and she expired during the night in a state of delirium.

The death of Emineh was a terrible shock also to her murderer. Her memory perpetually haunted him, whether at the festal board or in the council chamber, and, above all, in the silent watches of the night. He feared to be left alone, and was frequently heard by his pages to start up, and exclaim: "Emineh! it is she!—it is she! Save me from her vengeance!" Years later, when the Dervish Sheikh, Youssouf, while boldly reproving the Vizier for his crimes and cruelties, pointed out from the window the tomb of the murdered Emineh, he was interrupted by Ali, who exclaimed with tears: "Stop, stop, my father! Thou hast named the name of Emineh; overwhelm me not with the weight of thy maledictions!"

628 578 An account of the Albanian women would hardly be complete without some mention of the terrible blood-feuds (*Ram de Ghiak*), which, though often originating in the most trifling causes, result in great loss of life, and are frequently handed down from generation to generation. Sometimes these feuds

exist between individuals or families only; at others, 628
whole villages, or clans, are concerned in them. In 578
carrying them on, however, certain traditional rules are punctiliously adhered to, and occasionally those concerned, finding the state of continual hostility irksome, agree to a *bessa*, or truce, for a fixed period. When entire clans take part in the feud, each keeps strictly to its own wells or fountains, its public ovens and its markets. Such dissensions, however, rarely interrupt the usual occupation of a district, the land being tilled and the flocks pastured as usual in the daytime, the combatants assembling for the fray at evening on the common or in the market-place of the town or village. When a few men have bitten the dust, the hostile parties withdraw, in order to bury the dead, and the battle is over for the time.

Though women are not the principals in these 628
vendetta, it is no uncommon thing for them to take 562
part in the bloody frays to which they give rise, and 578
for which their custom of carrying arms makes them always ready. Mrs. Blunt describes[1] a combat of this description which took place in the neighbourhood of Uskup (Skopia), the cause of contention being merely a hare, to which two sportsmen laid equal claim. As neither would give in, it was decided that the case should be tried by combat on the village green. The duel, however, soon became a general *mêlée*, relatives and friends joining the principals, and women fighting by the side of their husbands and brothers. One girl of seventeen, the sister of one of the sportsmen, fought, it is said, with a desperation and success

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[1] *The People of Turkey*, vol. i. p. 81.

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562 worthy of a better cause, and fourteen victims fell,
578 thus perpetuating the feud among the survivors.

On another occasion the breaking of a girl's pitcher
at the fountain by two mischievous boys resulted in
such a desperate contest between her friends and
theirs that some sixty persons fell in the fight. It is
said, however, that even on such occasions as these
562 the men refrain, as far as possible, from striking or
577 wounding the women, for the Albanian code of
484 honour makes it impossible to attack a woman,
whether armed or unarmed. The sacredness attached
to their persons extends also to those whom they take
under their protection. Escorted by a girl only,
travellers may safely pass through the wildest parts
of the country, and a man may cross, without fear,
the lands of one with whom he is at feud, if he have
the safe-conduct of a woman belonging to his enemy's
family.

577 To such an extent is respect for women carried by
562 the Albanians, that it is contrary to their notions of
522 propriety ever to make women the subject of jokes or
humorous stories. Insult or annoyance offered to a
578 girl, or carrying off one without the consent of her
562 parents, almost invariably results in bitter feuds between families, or fierce battles between tribes. As
with most mountain people, the moral code is with
the Skipetars exceedingly strict. Among many of
684 the tribes any lapse from virtue on the part of a
woman is punished with death, a subsequent marriage
not being allowed to condone the fault. The penalty
of adultery is of equally Draconic severity. The unfaithful wife is placed up to her shoulders in a pit, and

then literally buried under a heap of stones, which are 684
piled upon and around her; and her husband has a
right to slay the partner of her guilt wherever he may
find him. Such cases are, however, of extremely rare
occurrence.

Considering this rigidity of morals it is a rather 173
curious fact that two clans, or tribes—the Clementi
and the Castrati—ascribe their origin to irregular
connections between the daughters of shepherds and
strangers, exiles from other countries. The stories
are almost identical. That of the Clementi is as
follows:—

A young man named Clement, clerk to a priest of 173
Moratcha, a district of Montenegro, weary of the 539
tyranny of his superior, ran away, and, not knowing
which way to go, made for the road leading from
Selze to Scutari. Arriving at a place called Tamara,
he came upon a flockmaster of Triepsei, who, astonished to see a youth dressed as he was in such a
place, inquired his business there. Without disclosing whence he came, Clement related his misfortunes,
and declared his intention of going to Scutari in order
to seek service with some family of position. Touched
with pity, and fearing for him the dangers of the
way, the shepherd invited the stranger to stay with
him and help him to keep his flocks. Clement
accepted the offer; and when the number of sheep he
was to receive as wages was settled, he followed his
new master home.

The shepherd was rich in flocks and lands, possessed of a second wife with a young family, and also of a grown-up daughter, Bubce, who was both ugly

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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and lame. Clement, being young and active, and also attentive to his new duties, soon gained the affection of his master, and, at the same time, that of his daughter, who, seeing no chance of ever being asked in marriage by her equal, took it into her head to make the shepherd lad fall in love with her. Clement long resisted the allurements of the uncomely Bubce, and pointed out to her the danger they would both run should any understanding between them come to her father's ears, and also the misery that would follow for her a union with a penniless man. "It is not our danger, but my deformity that thou fearest," the shrewd Bubce would reply, and, her devotion finally touching the heart of Clement, the lovers met frequently in secret.

Finding herself compelled to take her stepmother into her confidence, the latter, fearing that her husband's pride would impel him to some act of violence were the state of affairs to come suddenly to his knowledge, tried to prepare him for the news, and made him swear by St. Nicholas not to do harm to any one. [788] The angry father, in spite of his oath, at first threatened to kill both his daughter and her lover, and reproached them bitterly for the dishonour they had brought upon his house. Bubce, however, took all the blame upon herself, and her tears and prayers, joined to those of his wife, who reminded him of the oath he had sworn "by St. Nicholas," and which is of all oaths the most binding on an Albanian, finally prevailed with him. Clement might marry his daughter, but on condition that neither of them ever again should appear before him. So the couple

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retired to the pasturage of Beston, which the shepherd 539
gave to his daughter, taking with them the sheep
which constituted Clement's wages. Here they [465]
settled down and prospered, leaving behind them
great wealth in flocks, and a numerous family of de-
scendants. At the present day the tribe of the 162
Clementi number 500 families, or 5400 souls.

Social morality is pushed to its extremest limit by 562
the Miridite mountaineers. Though their women 577
enjoy the greatest freedom, an unmarried girl cannot,
out of doors, speak to a man not a relative of her
family without risking the loss of her reputation,
a calamity which few would care to survive. M.
Hecquard cites a case in point, related to him by an
Albanian *abbé*, which well illustrates the value that an
Albanian girl sets on her honour. A man happened
to remark in joke to a girl, the sister of one of his
friends, and before several other persons, that he had
seen her in conversation with a young man, whose
name he mentioned. On the following Easter Sun- 796
day, when all the tribe were congregated, the girl, 788
who was under fifteen, on leaving the church after 762
partaking, as is customary on that day, of the Eucha- 577
rist, called God to witness to her innocence, and
seizing a pistol from one of her relatives, shot herself
through the heart. Two days afterwards, the man
whose careless words had been the cause of the 627
tragedy fell by the hand of the victim's brother.

Among the Albanians exogamy is the general rule, 583
which is carried out by the Miridite chieftains to the 184
extent of carrying off by force a woman from one of
the neighbouring Moslem tribes. The wives of the

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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principal inhabitants of Orosh have all been acquired in this way, and far from resenting or being ashamed of the circumstance, they are, on the contrary, proud of it, and their relatives accept the situation on payment of the usual dowry. And although they may not embrace with enthusiasm the faith into which they are generally baptised as a preliminary to marriage, they scrupulously observe its external forms, are much devoted to their husbands, proud of their reputation, and jealous of their honour, which, should occasion require, they are ready either to defend or avenge.

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Among these exogamous tribes, succession is, as a rule, in the male line. If, however, there are no surviving sons, and a daughter chooses to remain single, she may enjoy the usufruct of her father's property, which on her death reverts to her nearest male relatives. If a man die childless his property is divided among his male relatives, who pay to his widow a pension, she remaining in his house or returning to her friends as she pleases, and retaining all that she has received from her parents either before or after her marriage.

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As with the Osmanlis, the children by slaves of Moslem Albanians have an equal right with those of free mothers to succeed to the estate of their father.[1]

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If the deceased husband has an unmarried brother, the latter has a right to marry the widow with or without her consent. On the wedding-day she receives from him the present of an ox, or its equivalent, four goats.

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[1] The father of Ali Pasha, of Ioannina, was the son of a slave.

If, however, she returns home and marries into another 587
family, her father pays to her first husband's heirs,
or to her son if she have one, half the dowry promised at her second betrothal. With the exception
of her deceased husband's brother, a woman may not
re-marry in the same village without the consent of
his relatives. In the mountains of Pulati this is [628]
never given, and a vendetta follows if it is dispensed
with. If the betrothed man die, his brother has also
the right to marry the betrothed maiden, but must
pay to her parents, in addition to the dowry already
promised, a hundred and fifty piastres.

An Albanian has the right to beat his wife if she 593
misconducts herself, but this right is little exercised
except among the Liaps, who are the rudest and most
brutal of all Albanians. He must, however, be careful
not to draw blood even in the most trifling degree,
for, if a wife receives a mere scratch in the course of
a castigation, she complains to her parents, who cite
the husband before the authorities. The penalty [681]
consists chiefly in the payment of a considerable fine,
which becomes the private property of the woman
abused.

Divorce is not uncommon among the Moslem Al- 586
banians, who follow in this respect the customs of the [171]
Ottomans, the husband paying to the discarded wife
the sum specified in the marriage contract in view of
such a contingency. The divorce generally takes place
at the instance of the husband, but the wife may also
claim it for a limited number of reasons. If, for
instance, a man has left his native town or village,
and does not return within the period fixed by the

586 Kadi, his wife may claim to be released from her vows to him. Other sufficient causes for divorce are ill-treatment, aberration of mind, and excessive corpulence on the part of the husband.

The Moslem Albanian, when he marries, is, like the
562 462 Osmanli, bound to provide his wife with food, clothes, and shelter in keeping with his position and means, and cannot require her, as do the Christians, to earn money for herself or for him by her labour. She, on her side, is required to obey her husband and never oppose his wishes, to abstain from anything likely to annoy or vex him, and to watch over the interests of the family, and, if poor, she must do the work of the house, cook the food, do the dairy work, spin the
[283] wool and flax necessary for the family use. The Albanian generally has no fondness for field labour, which he usually leaves to the women, children, and old men, and, when he does not follow the calling of a soldier or trader, prefers wood-cutting, attending to his vineyard, or, still more, tending sheep on the mountains, a pursuit which combines laziness with peril.

463 Besides those who enter the military service, numbers seek fortune in the large towns of Turkey, as traders, *cavasses*—a kind of orderly attached to Embassies, Consulates, banks, and other public offices, in which capacity they are much esteemed for their devotion to their employers—or in other positions of trust. As soon as they have amassed sufficient money to enable them to do so, they return home and marry, in order to prove themselves respectable members of
[593 society. After a brief sojourn in the bosom of their
591] families they return to their employment, leaving

their young wives in charge of their parents. 463
For with the Skipetars, as with the majority of 593
Oriental peoples, patriarchal customs still survive, 591
and all the sons bring home their brides to the
paternal roof, there to remain in subjection to the
parents-in-law until they shall themselves be heads of
families.

The highest aspiration of an Albanian wife is to be the 562
mother of boys, and she is less proud of her own beauty 593
and the rank of her family than of the number of her 181
sons and of their valour. The mother of many sons is
sure of the lasting affection of her husband, enjoys the
respect and consideration of the rest of his family, and
wields great authority in the household to which she
has come as a stranger. As they never permanently 888
leave the paternal roof, she may look forward to their 593
support and affection in her old age, and to see their
children growing up around her. When her husband [484]
leaves his home for a sojourn at a distance, custom requires
that she should manifest no grief at his departure.
Instead of accompanying him to the threshold,
and watching his familiar figure disappear in the
distance, or going to meet him on his arrival, she
hides herself at both the moment of his arrival and of 484
his departure. A woman's tears or joy, they say, must 562
not soften a man's heart when his duty lies before [152]
him. Neither must they ask for news of them at any
time during their absence. Yet in the depth of their
hearts no wives more regret the absence of their husbands,
as the touching little superstitious observances [777]
with which they console themselves testify. Unknown [789]
to their partners, they sew in their clothes

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562 777 small objects, which they themselves have worn, as 789 talismans to ensure their safe return, and during their often protracted absences they resort to various 787 methods of divination, either with or without the aid of a professional wise woman, in order to discover how their beloved spouses fare, where they sojourn, and how they are occupied.

The men on their side are not free from home- 152 sickness, and many are the pathetic little exile-songs, 593 in which their longings for their native mountains, and for the beloved ones from whom they are, for a time, separated, find expression. One may serve as a specimen:

[539] Now in Bender, now in Buda,
Bide we lone and desolate.
Patience, heart! What boots complaining,
So it hath been willed by Fate.

Yet this grievous bitter exile
Cannot longer still be borne;
Is't naught that we like felons wander
From Fatherland as outlaws lorn?

Who the exile's griefs can number?
Say whose woes can equal mine?
E'en the viper, should she sting me,
Poisoned by my blood would pine!

527 The amusements of the Albanian women are, for 535 the most part, limited to birth and wedding festivities, at which singing and dancing are the principal features. Albanian dances are of two kinds: the Pyrrhic, as it is called by travellers, which is usually indulged in by the men, and a kind of "kerchief dance," which is affected by the women, the two sexes always performing separately. The women dance in couples,

holding each other with one hand while they execute 527
a step composed of shuffles and leaps, and not par- 535
ticularly graceful, waving at the same time over their heads a kerchief, or scarf, with their disengaged hand. Another dance of a pantomimic character is sometimes performed at weddings for the amusement of [585]
the company. Three masked men, in the characters of a man, his wife, and his servant, perform a burlesque representing the weakness of man and the unfaithfulness of woman. The husband expresses by gesture his despair at seeing his wife make eyes at the wedding guests, while her servant, armed with a broom in lieu of a gun, threatens to shoot her mistress's lovers.

The Albanians are, as M. Dozon remarks,[1] "without 191
literature, without art, and almost without a history." Their language, which is difficult to learn and difficult to pronounce, is a complete mosaic of fragments borrowed from many sources, though a native element naturally predominates. Greek and Turkish words 197
abound, and many of Slav and Latin origin have [192]
become part of the vernacular. The language of the Skipetars is also divided between the two dialects spoken respectively by the Tosks and the Ghegs, though there is no well-defined line of demarcation between them. The purest Albanian is said to be spoken at Elbassan, the inhabitants of which according to the native saying:

> "Turk of Stambolhit [Constantinople],
> Skipe of Elbasanit,"

are looked upon as representative Skipetars. The total neglect of the mother tongue has been due in

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[1] *Manuel de la Langue Chkipe*, pp. 1 and 163.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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147 great measure to the profession of three creeds by the Albanian people, Turkish only being taught in the Moslem schools; in the Roman Catholic, Italian; and in the Orthodox Christian, Greek. The only section of the Albanians who can boast of any degree of culture are the Khams, and even this is not indigenous, but is borrowed entirely from the Epirote Greeks of Ioannina and its neighbourhood.

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The education of the vast majority of Albanian girls, whether Moslem or Christian, is of a purely domestic character, and, with the exception of a small number of Gheg and Tosk maidens of the better class, who are taught a little reading and writing and a great deal of etiquette by old lady *hodjas*, they are entirely unlettered. From the age of twelve to the
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time of their marriage, which generally takes place before they are sixteen, both Moslem and Christian girls are condemned to complete seclusion from the outer world. The customs of the Christians in this respect are, indeed, more rigid than those of the Moslems, for their daughters are not, during this interval, allowed to present themselves before visitors even of their own sex. Time is not, however, allowed to hang heavily upon the hands of these maidens, whatever their position and prospects. Besides taking an active part in all household duties, there is the important task to accomplish of getting ready her trousseau, and this involves the spinning, weaving, sewing, and embroidering of the various stuffs, cotton, linen, woollen, and silken, of which it is to be composed.

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The peasant and country girls generally, both of

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the mountains and of the plains, enjoy, as has been 369
seen, much greater liberty than their sisters of the 562
towns. With the exception of the Miridites, social intercourse with members of the other sex is not [184] denied to them, and, like the Greek and Vlach maidens, they tend the flocks on the hills, fetch water from the fountain, and lead a life generally of healthy industry.

CHAPTER IX.

ALBANIAN WOMEN: THEIR FAMILY CEREMONIES.

562 The domestic usages of the Albanians vary slightly,
184 according to locality and religion, but are, in their
main features, identical. And though the customs surrounding such family ceremonies as births, marriages, and deaths belong naturally more to the domain of women than of men, the latter are not less scrupulous in the fulfilment of the part in these observances which fall to their share.

156 Tribal and family pride being, as has been already
181 seen, the leading feature of Albanian character, the
desire of offspring, and especially male offspring, is naturally very strong with them. A childless man
[554] is designated by an expression which signifies "without a root," and is looked upon as a most unfortunate
[754] being. The wish, "May you be childless!" is also considered the most weighty curse that can be launched against a man by his enemy. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the dearest wish of every woman's heart is consequently to be the mother of a numerous family of boys, both for the sake of the future prosperity of the tribe and for the present social consideration which their birth ensures to her.
843 When the fact that an Albanian woman is about to

become a mother is announced to her husband's 843
family, she becomes thenceforward the object of the
most devoted attention on their part, the slightest
wish or preference she may express being immediately
gratified. Custom, however, forbids her eating certain
things, such as pomegranates and snails, and she
must not dye her hair more than three times before
her baby is born, or some unlucky accident would be
sure to happen to her or to the infant.

As soon as the baby is born it is washed, and a 844
sickle, with which straw has just been cut, is laid for
a few seconds on its stomach to prevent colics. The
maternal grandmother, whose privilege ~~it is~~ to perform [603]
this office for the baby, then proceeds to swathe
its little body tightly in broad swaddling bands of
white woollen stuff, and finally deposits it in a narrow [352]
wooden cradle. A jar of water is taken to the Hodja [855]
or the Papas, according to the creed of the mother,
to be blessed, and with some of its contents all the
women who officiated at the birth wash their hands.
The rest of the water is placed near the mother, and
all the women who visit her during the five ensuing
days dip their fingers in it and sprinkle her, expressing
at the same time a wish that she may have a plentiful
supply of milk for the baby, Albanian women [853]
making a point of nursing their own children. The
relatives are now admitted to felicitate the mother
and admire the baby, with the exception of its father,
whom custom obliges to keep out of the way and
refrain from seeing his child until it is eight days
old. The mother is presently placed on a state bed, 846
over which a magnificently embroidered silk coverlet

846 is spread, the national head-dress, ornamented with
[301] sequins, is placed on her head, and all her necklaces
are hung round her neck, to receive the friends and
acquaintances who now flock in to offer their con-
gratulations. In some parts of Albania, and especially
[431] among the Moslems, it is customary to bring hand-
[688] some presents to the infant. As each visitor did her
best to outshine her neighbour in the value of her
gift, this usage, among the Roman Catholic Miridites,
became so ruinously expensive, that the ban of the
Church was finally laid upon it. The visitors to the
mother and baby consequently now bring with them
only an egg, with which they rub the face of the new
arrival, with the wish, "*Pashi bar*" (May it be always
white!)—*i.e.*, never have cause to blush for its
actions.

852 When the baby is three days old the Fates are be-
[776] lieved to arrive and decide what its fortune is to be.
When two of the Weird Sisters have had their say, the
third speaks, and her decision is final.[1] On the even-
ing of this day, which is called the child's *Poganik*,[2]
all the relatives of the family assemble uninvited,
each bringing a small loaf, a girdle cake, and a
wooden flask of wine. On these they feast and drink
healths to the mother and child, the formula addressed
to the latter being, "May he have strong legs!"
[777] The women then set to work to make a large cake,
all present touching, "for luck," the sieve used to sift
the flour. As the dough is being kneaded coins are
put into it, and when baked it is broken in pieces

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[1] See "The Story of the Child," p. 319.

[2] The meaning of this term appears to have been lost by the Albanians.

over the infant. In the case of a boy all now touch 852 the cradle while they sing:

Poganik, When the boy grows a man, [539
A weaver we'll make him,
And money he'll bring us.[1] 562]

And for a girl:

Poganik, When our girl grows up tall,
She shall go to the valley
And bring us much water.

The company now separate, each person carrying home with her a piece of the Poganik cake, which is believed to possess beneficial qualities, and distributes it among the members of her household. When they have left, honey and other delicacies are laid out for the refection of the Fateful Three, the dogs are shut up, and the gates left open.

Until the baby is forty days old neither mother 846 nor child must leave the house, nor, after sunset, the room, for fear of supernal beings. During this period the fire is carefully kept up, and an ember of it must on no account be given to a neighbour, or all kinds of evil will ensue. Whoever has occasion to enter the house after nightfall, must leap over a firebrand laid on the threshold. Music and singing are also rigidly refrained from for fear of attracting the powers of the air.

The ceremony of naming the child is performed by 553 the Christian Albanians according to the baptismal 852 rite of the churches to which they respectively 779

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[1] Weaving was formerly a trade in high repute with the artisan class of Albanians, who left their homes to work in the towns where it was carried on. [463 286]

553 belong. With the Moslems no religious character is
852 attached to giving the baby a name, the eldest male
[779] relative of the family fulfilling this duty for its
youngest member. If, however, the child is a boy,
the curious and interesting ceremony of cutting its
hair is performed when it is a week old. The father
[608 invites to fulfil this office for his child the man he
171] most esteems, be he Moslem or Christian, and a bond
of friendship is thus formed, called "the St. Nikolo,"
similar in its character to the *pobratim* of the Slavs,
or the ἀδελφοποιτὸς of the Greeks, and also partaking
in its assumed relationship of the nature of the tie
between a Greek *Nono* and the family of his godchild;[1] he is considered a near relative, and may
enter the women's apartments. This substitute for a
[302] godfather cuts off, with a pair of scissors, some of the
baby's hair in the form of a tonsure, and puts the lock,
together with some coins, in a purse which is kept
closed for three days. At the end of that period the
money is taken out, and the hair thrown into the fire.

A similar practice is observed by the Roman Catholic Miridites on the first anniversary of a boy's birth, but it is performed under the auspices of St. Giovanni, instead of those of St. Nikolo.[2]

581 Although the Albanian beys have neither written
554 charters, armorial bearings, nor insignia, matrimonial
alliances between their families are regulated with
the most rigid observance of rank and precedence.

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[1] See *The Christian Women*, p. 72.

[779 177] [2] The Roman Catholic priests do their best to discourage many of these ancient customs, the efforts of their Church never tending to stimulate national feeling, but rather to crush it entirely.

Their wives and mothers, like women generally, are 581
well up in all the degrees of kinship and descent, and
the preliminaries of betrothals are usually settled by
them in the harem before they are submitted to the
head of the family and communicated to the parties
most nearly interested. Children are frequently 582
betrothed before they are ten years of age, and 584
occasionally while still in the cradle. In such cases, [583]
however, the arrangement is kept secret from the
couple until the young man is in a position to marry.
This usage is intended to prevent the Albanian
youths marrying in the towns to which they resort
for employment. A refusal on the part of a young 626
man to fulfil an engagement made for him by his 584
parents, would inevitably result not only in a vendetta
with the relatives of the rejected bride, but in social
ostracism. Such cases are, however, extremely rare,
for, as the bridegroom elect has, as a rule, never beheld
the bride chosen for him, he can have no reason for
refusing to marry her. In such an eventuality 582
national usage decrees that the younger brothers and
sisters of the maiden may not marry until her matrimonial
affairs are satisfactorily settled.

Women in Albania being less numerous than men, 583
it is not customary to require a portion with the [162]
bride, which is, on the contrary, as among the Vlachs
and Bulgarians, practically purchased from her father
or brothers for a sum of money which varies according
to the wealth and standing of the respective
families. The parents of the maiden, however, besides
providing the materials for her trousseau,
supply her with various articles of jewellery and a

583 certain amount of plenishing, the bridegroom supplying the rest.

585 184 With the exception of the nuptial benediction, the marriage customs of the Christian and Moslem Albanians are similar, and there is very little difference in the songs by which they are accompanied. [584] Among the Moslems the betrothal takes place in the presence of the Kadi. This functionary receives the declaration of mutual consent, made on the part of the maiden by her natural guardians, who undertake to prove it by the mouth of two Moslem witnesses. After a prayer for the benediction of Allah on the union, a contract is drawn up enumerating the articles to be given to the bride by her parents, and stipulating the sum to be paid to her by the husband in the event of his divorcing her. To this document the Kadi and the witnesses affix their seals, and this ceremony constitutes the legal marriage.

As with the Osmanlis, the bride does not, however, go to her husband's house until the wedding festivities have taken place, the interval ranging in duration from a few weeks to a year, according to the convenience of the bridegroom's family. As the ceremonies observed in Epirus present so many points of similarity with those of the Greeks,[1] I will here describe only those belonging to Upper Albania which present features peculiar to themselves.

The festivities invariably begin on a Thursday with the sending of the *dunti* by the bridegroom. This is the decorated box containing the presents to the bride of various articles of dress and ornament, including boots and shoes of yellow leather embroidered with gold, together with a loaf of sugar, some coffee, and other customary trifles. The *dunti* is carried by two boys belonging to the bridegroom's family, both of whose parents must be living. As they arrive at the house the women and girls sing a song beginning : 585 [184]

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[1] Vol. i. chap. iii.

[539]

O flaxen one, far whiter
Than foam on Drin's wave-crest,
—— sends to thee the *dunti*,
All in a golden chest.

All the members of the family receive the boys at the foot of the staircase with every mark of respect, and conduct them to the reception-room. As the *dunti* is placed on a coffer, all present cry, "*Per heir*" (Good luck !) The envoys are seated in the place of honour, while all the family of the bride remain standing; refreshments, consisting of liqueurs and bonbons, are served twice, complimentary speeches are exchanged, and after about an hour of polite attentions, the boys depart. On the same day a youth is despatched by the bridegroom's parents to invite the guests for the following Monday. The formula he makes use of is—"So-and-so is to be married, and begs you to come next Monday to the wedding with all your family, or, if you prefer it, let the head of the family come alone." At each house he receives in return for his invitation a present of a few piastres. The number of persons invited by each family is fixed according to the degree of kinship or friendship existing between them and the bridegroom's family. [574]

The bride's family send out their invitations in the

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585 same way on the Friday. On this day, too, the women assemble to help in the preparations for the ceremony. While some busy themselves with putting finishing touches to the trousseau, or helping in the kitchen, the others take the bride in hand and commence to "busk" her for the occasion. Compelled by custom [302] to submit silently to whatever operation they may, in their zeal to make her as beautiful as possible, subject her, the poor bride is bathed, scrubbed, "massaged," and *dépilée*, her hair and eyebrows are dyed black, and her feet and hands stained red with henna.

On Sunday evening the bride, dressed in her bridal array, and decked in all her ornaments, is presented to the women of the family. If she is of humble station, jewels are borrowed for her to wear for the occasion, so that, on this day at least, she may lack nothing. The work of the women who have dressed her is then freely and openly criticised, no word, however, being uttered which could possibly hurt the feelings of the bride; for, according to the good ladies of Scutari, a bride can never be otherwise than beautiful. Later on the father and brothers enter, and the maiden, throwing herself at their feet, asks their pardon with tears for all the faults she has since her childhood committed. [152] Hardly has the father raised her than a chorus of sobs and cries is heard from all the company, who thus testify their sorrow at the approaching separation of the maiden from her family. When their grief has exhausted itself, they dry their tears and break into a song, which, translated, is as follows:—

Lower your crests, ye mountains high,
That we may the moon descry
Sailing through the azure sky.
Our bride her mother's counsels heard,
Who said, "My daughter, mark my word,
Love and respect your father new."
"That, mother will I gladly do—
I'll love and honour him alway
Who's given to me a bridegroom gay."

On Monday morning, the homes of both bride and
bridegroom are thronged with guests, sometimes to
the number of several hundreds. Each one brings an
oka[1] of coffee and another of sugar for the benefit [431]
of the house, and at the same time presents the [422]
bride with a gold coin, the value of which varies [302]
with the degree of relationship of the giver. These
coins are subsequently strung into necklaces, and
constitute part of the personal property of a married
woman.

At early dawn the bride is dressed in her wedding finery, decked with all her jewels, and, at sunrise, is led to a corner of the principal reception-room. Here custom requires her to stand, motionless and speechless, with downcast eyes and hands crossed on her breast, until she starts for her new home. Two women, posted at either side, keep watch and ward over her, and the rest of the female guests, seated round the room on the divans, stare at the poor girl as if she were the idol of their worship. At mealtimes, on this and the two following days, she eats alone, covered with a veil, though if she is anxious to make a good impression she will partake of food only

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[1] About 2¾ lbs. avoirdupois.

585 if compelled to do so, in order to show how great is
her regret at leaving the paternal roof.[1] In fact, her
behaviour throughout is intended to typify her reluctance
to exchange the single for the married state.
Meantime the guests divert themselves with liqueurs,
262 coffee, and sweets, and the performances of the profes-
463 sional musicians hired for the occasion.

About ten o'clock a cart arrives from the bride-
groom's abode to fetch the bride's baggage, which is
415 packed in a large wooden box ornamented with
531 designs of flowers rudely executed. When it starts
every one shouts, "*Per heir*" (Good luck!), and among
the Christians, several women accompany the cart
788 outside the gate, sprinkling both it and its contents
with holy water. A few minutes afterwards, all the
male guests invited by the bridegroom's friends set
out, preceded by his father, who leads a richly
caparisoned horse on which the bride will ride home.
As they leave the house the women sing:

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Happy may thy journey be,
Eldest of our family.
Holy sign of cross now make,
To the right thy way then take.
If to us thou bring fair bride,
May the sugar-plums taste sweet,
If a foul one by thy side
That they bitter taste were meet.

585 Arrived at their destination, the party range them-
262 selves around the courtyard, where glasses of cognac
and water, and sweets and sugar-plums of various kinds

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[1] The Mongols of Tibet observe a similar custom. See *Journal of Sarat Chandra Das*, published by the Royal Geographical Society.

are handed round by men-servants. During this ceremony, which every one endeavours to prolong, the bride, enveloped in a long cloak and covered with a veil, is led downstairs. She walks as slowly as possible, supported on either hand by an attendant as if infirm, and is hidden from all eyes by silken draperies held on either side of her path until she has been seated on her horse. 585 [262]

The procession then starts. The husband's guests walk first, then comes the bride, her horse led by a servant, supported on either side by her brothers, behind her follow the musicians and singers, the rear being brought up by her relatives and friends. Various songs are sung *en route*, of which the following may serve as a specimen:—

[539]

Our fair bride is on the way,
Like a pink, so fresh and gay.
At the door's our brideling fair,
Like the pink's her perfume rare.
In the courtyard is the bride,
She's a rose that's open'd wide.
On the stair the bride see now,
White as jasmine is her brow.
Now she comes within the room,
Her neck is like the lily's bloom.
"Bride of mine, now cease to grieve,
Let not sobs thy bosom heave."
"Bridegroom mine, can I be gay?
I've my father left to-day.
From my home for ever torn,
It is meet that I should mourn."

The bride, on leaving the door of her childhood's home, and at every street corner she passes, inclines 585

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

585 her head three times in token of farewell to the places she will never again, as a maiden, behold.[1] When her approach is announced to the women of her husband's family, they sing :

[539]
"Bride, lost bride, what wouldst thou find?"
"The courtyard gate of my bridegroom kind."
"What, O bride, wilt thou give to me
If I show now his courtyard gate unto thee?"
"Shirts, O my bridegroom, all broidered and fine."
"Small is thy guerdon, O brideling of mine,
For I can take them, nor ask leave of thine."

Arrived at the bridegroom's home, the same precautions are taken in dismounting the bride as were observed in placing her upon her horse. The women of the house come down to receive her, and pushing her gently, lead her, as if against her will, into the nuptial chamber, where she is seated on cushions. When coffee has been served and partaken of, the bride's friends take their leave, the eldest among them saying in a loud voice :

"Until now she belonged to God and to us, now and henceforward she belongs to you and to God, who will protect her."[2]

As they retire, the last message of the bride to her mother is sung :

[539]
Stay, stay, O dearest brothers, stay!
A word to you the bride would say.
Stay, stay, O dearest brothers, stay!

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[1] This observance may possibly have its origin in the propitiatory farewells paid by a bride, among the ancient Slavs, to her father's household gods. Compare Kovalevsky, *Modern Customs, &c., of Russia*, pp. 33-4.

[606] [2] This is intended to signify that if the bride is not well treated in her new home her parents will intervene on her behalf.

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My greetings to my mother bear,
My greetings to my sisters fair,
Tell them my heart will love them e'er.
Stay, stay, O dearest brothers, stay!
Each day, when comes the even glow,
My prayers, on winds that softly blow,
For them to God on high shall go—
Stay, stay, O dearest brothers, stay!

As soon as the bride's relatives have left, the women raise her veil with the silver handle of a dagger, or some other object made of the same metal,[1] and whether she comes up to their expectations or not, they are in duty bound to sing:

How beautiful she is, the bride!
May God preserve her!
Her brow is high and white and wide,
May God preserve her!
Her eyebrows have the rainbow's curve,
May God preserve her!
Her eyes for coffee cups might serve,[2]
May God preserve her!
Her cheeks the rose's inmost fold
May God preserve her!
Her mouth a little box of gold
May God preserve her!
Her lips as red as cherries are
May God preserve her!
Her teeth than pearls are whiter far!
May God preserve her!
Like milk her skin is fair and white
May God preserve her!
Like cypress is she tall and slight
May God preserve her!

Among the Christian Albanians, the religious ceremony is now performed in the nuptial chamber, where 585

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[1] Magical properties are attributed to this metal by the Albanians.
[2] Literally, "as large as coffee-cups"—*Andjanes.*

[777]

585 an altar is specially prepared. The nearest relatives of the bridegroom only are present, and he, like the bride, simulates great unwillingness to enter the apartment. The mass performed, the priest asks the bride three times if she accepts the man kneeling at her side for her husband. Custom, however, forbids her to [577] reply, and at the third interrogation the women in attendance force her to bow her head in token of assent. The bridegroom, on the contrary, pronounces his consent in a loud voice. However plain the bride may prove to be, custom forbids that any sign of disgust or annoyance should be manifested. If, however, she be afflicted with any physical deformity, such as lameness, blindness, or a humped back, the husband may claim an indemnity from her parents, or, if he is prepared to abide the consequences of such an insult, may send her back to them.

The ceremony terminated, the bridegroom leaves the room, and the female guests re-enter, extolling in song the graces and virtues with which, according to [562 264] them, every bride is endowed. The feast is then served, the men sitting down by themselves in one room, and the women in another, and the two parties amuse themselves separately for the rest of the evening. An hour before midnight, the women conduct the bride to the nuptial chamber, and, having taken off her bridal finery, cover her face with a veil, and leave her. When the bridegroom enters, he simulates astonishment at finding a maiden there. Lifting the veil from her head, he declares himself to be enraptured with her beauty, and asks her a hundred questions. The bride feigns sleep and pretends not to hear him. He offers her sweets which have been left 585 there purposely, but still she heeds him not. This comedy may, if the bridegroom be timid and the bride reserved, be prolonged until the third evening after the marriage, in which case the courage and virtue of the bride are extolled by the women in song. On the third evening, however, custom requires the bride to respond to her husband's advances. On the three days following the wedding the bride, dressed as before, stands like a statue in the reception-room to receive the women visitors who flock to the house in order to inspect her.

The ceremonies attending the nuptials of the [369] mountain people are almost precisely similar to those customary in the towns, with the exception that the bride is not veiled when conducted to her husband's home. A romantic reserve, however, surrounds the 593 interviews between the young couple, who, especially 831 if the husband be one of a numerous family and have no private apartments, can only meet in secret until they have children of their own. The mountaineers cherish this custom, which, they contend, by surrounding with a halo of romance and mystery the relations of the young couple, tends to keep their love for each 585 other fresh and warm. The wedding processions of the 184 Moslems and Christians are only to be distinguished by the more picturesque effect of those of the former. Many of the company, dressed in rich apparel glittering [291 531] with gold embroidery, accompany the bride on horseback, indulging as they go, whenever they arrive at a spot sufficiently spacious, in the manly old Osmanli [524] game of throwing the *djerid*, or spear. Pistols

585 184 are fired incessantly, and the strains of wild music echoing from the surrounding hills add to the animation of the scene.

The wedding ceremonies observed in Southern Albania, in so far as they differ from those of the Northern Albanians, resemble very closely the Greek country customs described in the preceding volume.[1]

764 171 The funeral observances of the Albanians also resemble in some degree those of the Greeks. Family ties are equally strong in both races, and the death of a relative is always a source of poignant grief to the survivors. 763 The demonstrations of sorrow are loudest and most heartrending when a man or woman dies in the prime of life. When he is believed to be at the point of death, the women watching round him give utterance to frightfully piercing cries and shrieks, upon hearing which the friends hasten to the house of mourning in order to take part in the death chorus. When the last breath is drawn, all the near female relatives of the deceased who are not past middle age—wife, sisters, sisters-in-law, and daughters—testify their grief by beating their breasts, scratching their faces until the blood flows, and tearing out or cutting off their hair. In their utter abandonment of sorrow they also beat their heads against the walls of the room, calling wildly upon the deceased by his or her name, often exhausting themselves to such a degree as to lose for the time the use of their voices. With the weaker among them these frenzies of sorrow gene-

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[1] Chapter iii. An account of these ceremonies may be found in Von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, and Dozon, *Contes Albanais*.

rally terminate in a fainting fit, while others have frequently to be restrained by their friends from doing themselves grievous bodily harm in their excitement. 763

The men of the family receive visits of condolence from those of their own sex, standing in the courtyard. The formula in which sympathy is usually expressed is, "May you continue to enjoy good health," the speaker at the same time putting his right hand on the shoulder of the mourner. The latter responds, "May our friends be well," and the visitor enters the house to express in the same way his sympathy to the women of the family. The corpse is washed and laid out according to the usages of the faith, Christian or Moslem, professed during lifetime, and is dressed in its best clothes, which are, however, taken off before burial. And now begins the formal wailing round the body, in which the women of the family are assisted by their neighbours. 764

The majority of the dirges used are, like those of the Greeks, conventional, every woman having her memory well stored with a *répertoire*, from which she selects those suited to the occasion. They are sung antiphonically, a verse or couplet being first chanted as a solo, and then repeated by the rest in chorus. The nearest relatives first lead the chant, and continue without interruption until either their voices or their memories are exhausted. It is then the turn of the other women, who, when they consider that one has had the lead long enough, stop her with a sign, and another lifts up her voice. Among the dirges sung for a youth killed in battle the following, which is in the Tosk dialect, is one of the oldest and best known. 764 533 [462]

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The ideas expressed in it may also be found in Greek and Roumanian folk-song.

[539]

Kyabése's bridge hard by,
Slain by treach'rous foes I lie.
Comrades, greet my mother well,
Bid her the two oxen sell;
Give the money to my Life,
To my dear, my promised wife.
Asks mother what doth me betide,
Say, I have wedded here a bride.
Asks she who holds me with her charms,
Tell her, three bullets in my breast,
Six in my legs and in my arms.
Asks she who came as bidden guest,
And at my wedding feast was seen;
The crows and ravens, say, were there;
They have the friends and neighbours been,
And they devoured the wedding fare!

Sometimes animals and inanimate objects, with which the deceased has been associated in his lifetime, are poetically represented as missing him and mourning his loss, as in this lament for a Tosk chieftain who has met with a violent death:—

[539]

Derwen Agha, *veh!* [1] all slain
Lie thy followers on the plain!
Hear thy sword cry from the wall,
"Where's my lord?" in sorrow's thrall,
"Where's my lord, that he no more
Draws and waves me as of yore?"
Hear thy charger from his stall,
"Where's my lord?" complain and call,
"Where's my lord, to fill my rack,
Girth the saddle on my back?
Where's my lord, that he bestride me,
Gaily through the mountains ride me?"

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[1] The Albanian exclamation of distress.

For the untimely death of a young wife, not yet a mother, the following may serve as a specimen :— 764 533 [539]

O willow-wand so golden,
No townswoman more slight;
O beautiful of feature,
As partridge on the height!

O swift as weaver's shuttle,
Where wilt thou henceforth bide?
O partridge on the red rock,
Thy dower in chest must hide!

Where wilt thou be this summer,
Reft from thy dear lord's side?
O beauteous dancing vine-branch,
Thou wast a virgin bride!

Like blade of grass thou grewest,
Refined as finest gold,
And thy short life, O joyless!
Few joys for thee did hold.

A mother's grief is expressed in these, the opening verses only, of a long dirge for an only son. As I have previously had occasion to mention, the women of South Albania especially manifest an excessive degree of grief for the death of children, and often refuse, when left childless, to survive them. 764 533 539

O Death! O thou who know'st no ruth!
Why rob me of my son?
Why tear him from my loving arms?
My boy, my dearest one!

No pity hadst thou in thy stroke!
Before thou laidst him prone,
Why torture him with cruel pains?—
My boy, my dearest one!

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

764 Remorseless, Death, I know thou art,
533 Yet, from a mother lone,
[539] How couldst thou take her only son,
Her boy, her dearest one?

Why didst thou not, my treasured child,
My only darling son—
Why didst thou not resist his blow?
My boy, my dearest one!

Ah! knew'st thou not, within my heart,
Should'st thou from me be gone,
Thou ope'st a wound must ever bleed?
My boy, my dearest one!

[152] Sometimes, too, as among the Greek women, a mourner finds no adequate outlet for her grief in the conventional dirges, and, inspired by sorrow, bursts into an improvised lament for the lost son, brother, or husband, extolling his virtues and bewailing his fate.

696 763 152 It is said that when an Albanian of the mountains is led to execution by the authorities for any crime but that of theft, which is by these people alone considered disgraceful, he walks to his doom with head erect and bearing dignified, improvising as he goes his own dirge, in which he relates the circumstances that have led to his premature departure from the world. His mother and sisters follow him to the place of execution, their hearts devoured with grief, but wearing smiles on their lips, in order that their relative may, on his side, show no sign of weakness. Intently they listen to his death-song, the words of

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which they treasure in their memories, and hand down to their posterity.[1]

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The funeral, in conformity with the usual Eastern custom, takes place within four-and-twenty hours after death. Before the corpse leaves the house, it is measured with a string, which is then thrown up into the rafters. If the deceased has not a silver ring on his finger, a coin is placed, as among the Greeks, on the mouth; and one of the relatives seats himself three times on that part of the floor on which he breathed his last. On the way to the burial ground, the men surround the bier, the women follow behind, and resume their wailings as the procession leaves the house. Arrived at the mosque, or church, the men enter, but the women remain without, weeping, shrieking, and lamenting continually. Before leaving the church, the men give the dead a last kiss, the women doing the same at the grave. The body is laid in the bare earth, and a stone slab is placed over it, on which the earth is cast. At this stage of the proceedings, the cries of the women become quite heartrending; they crowd round the grave, and can with difficulty be prevented from throwing themselves

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[1] This calls to mind Burns' spirited song, "MacPherson's Lament," the words of which might fittingly be used by an Albanian *pallikar*:

"I've lived a life of sturt and strife;
I die by treacherie;
It burns my heart, I must depart,
And not avengèd be.
Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he;
He played a spring, and danced it round,
Beneath the gallows tree."

764 into it, and even the men are frequently heard to sob aloud. As soon as it is filled up, however, a sudden [262] silence prevails, for now the *Kokiete*, the Greek Kólyva (Κόλυβα)[1] is handed round, and it is accounted sinful to mourn whilst eating it. As each person takes a handful of this funeral dish, he says, "May he (or she) be forgiven."

765 On this and the two following days, the house of mourning is filled with a succession of condoling friends, who bring with them all the food necessary [252] for the family, for no cooking is done in it during this period. Others send presents of wine or spirits, the bearer of which delivers them with the words: "May I have come for your good." On the third day, the wailing at the grave is repeated, and continued in the house of mourning for forty days, being performed either early on the morning of each day, or on Sundays and feast days only, by the women of the house and those who visit them for this purpose.

[184] With members of the Orthodox Church it is customary, as among the Greeks, to exhume the bones at the end of three years. Moslems, however, have a great dislike to disturbing a dead body in any way.

765 761 The grief of relatives is, as a rule, less demonstrative for the death of a woman; and for a man well stricken in years, no wailing takes place. In the latter case, the deceased has usually set aside one or more sheep to be sacrificed on his death as an atonement for his sins, the flesh of which serves for the funeral feast. At this feast, the guests drink "to

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[1] See description of this funeral dish, vol. i. p. 99.

[Analyst's note: Kólyva is made of flour, boiled wheat, pomegranates, raisins, nuts, and spices.]

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the forgiveness" of the departed, and sing funeral songs in his honour.

When, as often happens, a man dies at a distance from his home, on the arrival of the tidings of his death, the funeral ceremonies are, with the exception of the actual interment, performed as above described. The women lament, friends hasten to comfort them, and the procession goes to church, the place of the bier being occupied by a youth, who carries the dish of *Kólyva*, on which is placed a cake for the priest.

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Only slight changes are generally made in their dress by the Albanian women on the death of a relative. The chief mourners cut their hair short, turn their coats inside out, so that the fur lining alone is seen, and lay aside all ornaments. [604] The nieces of the deceased allow their hair to hang loose for some months, or cut off a lock, and wear on their heads a black kerchief. A similar head-dress is assumed by the widow, who, if she has arrived at middle age, wears it for the rest of her life. [292 587] If, however, she is still young, and intends to return to her father's house with the expectation of finding another husband, she wears at the same time her bridal apparel, and does not manifest such an exaggerated degree of grief.

Sometimes, as illustrated in the history of Shainitza[1] and in folk-tale,[2] the grief of the women finds expression in giving to their dwelling the most dismal and funereal appearance, by painting black either the whole of the outside of the house, or the shutters only, and covering up or removing from their usual places the mirrors and other ornaments.

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[1] See p. 225.

[2] P. 315.

CHAPTER X.

ALBANIAN WOMEN: THEIR CULTURE-BELIEFS.

779 THOUGH speaking the same language, observing the same customs, and cherishing the same traditions and aspirations, the Albanians, as may have been seen from the foregoing chapter, are, in matters of religious belief, divided by three Creeds, the Moslem, Orthodox Greek, and Roman Catholic. The Moslems constitute about one-half of the population, and of the remaining half the majority follow the rites of the Eastern Church.

797 After the loss of their independence the Albanians
175 began by degrees to abandon the faith of their forefathers for that of their conquerors. Islam, however, made but slow progress among them until towards the close of the sixteenth century, when the Porte promulgated a law assuring the possession of their property to those Albanian families who would bring up one
[538] of their sons in the Moslem faith. A Tosk proverb says, "Where the sword is, there is the faith;" and the advantages which a nation of mercenary soldiers could not fail to find in belonging to the religion of the dominant race, soon made conversion so general that the populations of whole villages, towns, and even districts would simultaneously apostatise to Islam. Wholesale perversions, such as these, have

not been unfrequent even in the present century, and 797
the prevailing tendency on the part of the highlanders 175
to become Moslems, and of the Orthodox Christian
agriculturists to emigrate to Greece and elsewhere, [167]
makes it probable that in course of time the country
may become entirely Moslem.

Like the Kūrds, however, the Moslem Albanians 771
have among the Turks the reputation of being but 184
indifferent followers of the Prophet, and the same
opinion is entertained by their Greek neighbours of
the Albanians who call themselves members of the
Orthodox Church. Christian men marry Moslem [582
women, and *vice versâ*; the sons are brought up in the 869]
faith of Mohammed, and the daughters in that of Christ;
Moslems revere the Virgin Mary and the Christian
saints, and make pilgrimages to their shrines; Christians
reciprocally resort to the tombs of Moslem saints [755
for the cure of ailments or in fulfilment of vows; while 778]
Christians and Moslems alike mingle with their culture-beliefs,
ancient rites and superstitious usages, which
both creeds have proved powerless to eradicate. The [779]
Miridites and some tribes of Ghegs on the coast
adopted the Roman Catholic creed about the end of
the last century, and follow the Latin rite with some
Oriental differences, as, for instance, the administration
of the Eucharist in both kinds to the laity.

The celebration of the Festival of Our Lady of 796
Skodra (or Scutari), which is held on the anniversary 771
of the departure of her image from the Latin church
in that town, and in which Christians and Moslems participate,
is a striking example of the half-hearted belief
of the Skipetars. The story goes that, many years 173

173 since, when all the country was Christian, there stood in the city of Scutari a beautiful image of the Virgin Mary, to whose shrine thousands flocked every year from all parts of the country to offer their gifts, perform their devotions, and be healed of their infirmities. Such, indeed, was the healing power of [755] this Madonna that no sick person was ever known to kiss in faith her white feet and not depart completely cured.

For some cause or other, however, it fell out that there was dissension between the priest and the people, and one day the latter came to the church in great crowds, declaring that unless the priest yielded to them they would then and there abjure the faith of Christ and embrace in its stead that of Mohammed. The priest, whether right or wrong, still remaining firm, his congregation tore the rosaries and crosses from their necks, trampled them under their feet, and, going to the nearest mosque, were received by the Mollah into the fold of the True Believers. Grieved and displeased at this wholesale desertion of those who had received nothing but benefits at her hands, Our Lady of Skodra disappeared during the night from that ungrateful land. What new shrine the beautiful image had hallowed with its presence was, for a time, unknown. Some months later, however, tidings were brought that, on the night of her departure from Scutari, an image of the Madonna had miraculously entered the church of a remote village in Italy, and had there taken up its abode. A voice was also, it is said, heard crying out over Scutari that not till the last *Tŭrki* (Moslem) had left the land of

Skiperi would Our Lady of Scutari forgive her 173
children, and return to her ancient shrine.

The scene on this day in the great square building, 796
which, with its bare walls and absence of ornament,
bears little resemblance to a Romish church, is most [346]
striking and strange. The mass performed on the
occasion is listened to by a congregation whose
waists are perfect arsenals, bristling with pistols and
yataghans of every shape and pattern. There are [291]
wild-looking, fierce-moustachioed highlanders, white- [411]
kilted Mussulmans, chieftains blazing with gold embroidery,
and milder citizens in more homely garb, all
assembled in honour of the Madonna, before whose
shrine their ancestors had worshipped. Yet, notwithstanding
their participation in the religious rites of 577
their neighbours, the Albanians are not less tenacious 579
of their own honour than of that of the creed they
profess, any insult offered to a Christian church being
promptly retaliated upon a Moslem mosque, and *vice
versâ.* Of this the following incident, which occurred
about the middle of the century, offers a striking
illustration.

A certain Tahir Mala, of Bugna, belonging to the 585
Moslem tribe of the Gascii, having married his son to
a maiden of the Christian Schialla, set out to bring
the bride home, accompanied, according to national
custom, by a numerous train, and preceded by the
tribal banners. On the return journey, they stopped,
as usual, every now and then to fire volleys into the air.
Their way, however, lying past a Christian cemetery,
the cross, standing in the midst, offered a mark for
their pistols too tempting to be resisted, and was soon 798

798 riddled with balls. The tribe of the Schialla, having heard of this insult to their religion, prepared to take 798 vengeance for it; but, the offenders being out of reach, they made the family of Bobi, to which the bride 579 belonged, responsible. The Bobi engaged to obtain 628 satisfaction within a week, or pay the penalty, and on the morrow the young men of the family set off for Bugna, where they killed two nephews of Tahir Mala. Not content, however, with this retribution, they entered the mosque, where they killed a pig, rubbed the doors with its blood, and placed the head on the ledge of the pulpit.

The Moslems, at this profanation of their mosque, hastened to complain to Mustapha Pasha, of Skodra, who prepared to send a military expedition against the Bobi. The latter, with the rest of the Schialla tribe, placed themselves under the protection of the Miridite Prince, Prenk Doda, who threatened the Pasha that, if troops were sent against the Schialla, he would not only support them, but call all the Christian highlanders to arms. The Pasha, alarmed at the prospect of a religious war for which he would be held responsible, then agreed to let the insulted cross atone for the polluted mosque, and cry quits with the Christians.

795 The number of Albanians affiliated to the Bektashi Order of Dervishes is said to be no fewer than 80,000. The lax observance of even the outward forms of Islam, characteristic of the followers of Hadji Bektash generally, is more especially observable in the conduct of the Skipetars, and has occasionally subjected them to persecution from their Osmanli Moslem neigh-

bours. One of their chief offences, in the eyes of the strictly orthodox, is the scant attention paid by the 795
wives of these sectarians to the law of *namekhram*, or wearing the veil, it being their practice to appear unveiled before their husband's friends when he gives them permission to do so. [291 688]

Cloistered life is not more popular with the women of Albania than with those of the rest of Turkey. In 792 589
Islam there is, of course, no such resource for disappointed maidens, and marriage being as much the rule among Christians, whether orthodox Greek or Roman Catholic, as among Moslems, nunneries are not numerous, and their inmates are but few. Those which exist, however, offer a welcome asylum to the small section of women whom circumstances have doomed to a life of celibacy, and who the more willingly enter them as they, by so doing, acquire a degree of liberty which could never be theirs while living as unmarried women in the house of their father or brother. For in the East, as I have before remarked, convent rule is remarkably lax, and, beyond attending the prescribed church services, no very strict account is required of the way in which the good sisters spend their time. If report speaks true, they do not always refrain from making use of the opportunities for flirtation afforded them by their emancipation from conventional restraint.

CHAPTER XI.

ALBANIAN WOMEN: THEIR FOLK-BELIEFS.

144 MR. STUART GLENNIE's suggestion[1] that the Albanians
114 are probably a mixed Pelasgo-Aryan race, and that
the Pelasgians, whose Larissas extend from Italy and Greece through Asia Minor to Northern Syria and Chaldea, were related to the Archaian White Race, the founders of civilisation in the Euphrates Valley, gives special interest to all their folk-lore.

771 Survivals of ancient Nature-worship, which neither
Christianity nor Islam has succeeded in eliminating,
may be found in the form of the oaths still in
788 use in the Albanian highlands. Contact with the
[177] outer world has taught the dwellers in towns to call
upon the Virgin and Saints, or Allah and Mohammed, as witnesses to their word; but the oaths of the pastoral Skipetar are still "By sky and earth" (*Per kíelh e per dhé*), "By mountain and plain" (*Per ket ziarm e per ket uĩ*), and "By sun and moon" (*Per ket dielh e per ket hân*). The curious ceremony of taking the "Oath of the Stone," which is said by Wassa Effendi[2] to have been a Pelasgian custom, is

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[1] First made in Europe and Asia (1879), and more fully in papers on the Archaian White Races, read in 1887 at meetings of the Royal Historical Society and of the British Association.

[2] *Etudes sur l'Albanie et les Albanais.*

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

also made use of by the Albanian highlanders 788 generally, when settling matters of importance. According to this writer, quoting from M. Ampère,[1] [171] a similar custom also existed among the ancient Romans. Sylla, on leaving Rome to fight against Mithridates, required Cinna to swear, not by the national divinities, but on the Sacred Stone, and according to an ancient rite of the Etruscans, to make no innovations during his absence. Cinna, when pronouncing this oath, placed the stone on his shoulder, and then threw it backwards, while he pronounced, in a loud voice, the curses which should fall upon him were he false to his promise. The taking of this oath in Albania is attended with the same [627 628] ceremonies. It is sworn by the elders of the *phars*, or clans, on the occasion of settling serious disputes, such as those concerning the boundaries of village lands, or other communal matters. The elders of the two tribes, Christian or Moslem, after taking the Oath of the Stone, assemble in council and settle the question at issue.

This oath, in another form, also enters into everyday speech. In course of conversation, when a Gheg wishes to emphasise what he is saying, he takes up in his hand, or points to, the nearest stone, saying, "By this weight" (*Per ket pêsh*), and a Tosk makes use of the phrase, "By the heaviness of this stone" (*Per te rand te keti gúr*).[2]

The Supernals, with which the Albanian women 776 terrify themselves and their children, appear to be, for the most part, like those of the Bulgarians,

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[1] *Histoire des Romains à Rome.*

[2] Wassa Effendi, *Op. cit.*

776 personifications of the powers of Nature. Of these
imaginary beings, some belong exclusively to Albania,
[171] while others may also be found among the super-
stitions of Slavs, Greeks, and Turks. The Vilas
seem to approach most nearly to our own fairies;
though, like the Nereids of the Greeks, they are of
the full stature of mortals. Like our fairies, too,
it is unlucky to mention them by name, and they
are generally referred to as "Those outside," "The
Happy Ones," the "Brides of May," or "The Brides
of the Mountain." As a rule they are harmless, if
not offended, and amuse themselves with elfish tricks,
such as taking little children up to the roof of the
house to play with and bringing them back safely.
776 They, however, take it very ill when mortals disturb
753 them in their haunts, and interrupt their banquets; and
761 so capricious are they, that they will place themselves
invisibly in spots where they are likely to be dis-
turbed, in order to have a little vent for their pent-up
malice. The unlucky wight who sets an irreverent
foot within their elfin rings receives a stroke from an
invisible hand, and ere long sickens and dies. In
consequence of this belief, it is said of one for whose
death no adequate cause can be assigned, "He has
received a blow."

776 The favourite haunts of the Vilas are retired and shady spots, but they also have a partiality for the gutters on the eaves of houses, which it is a rather risky matter to clean out, especially at night. The Vilas are said, in North Albania, to be of two kinds—well-disposed and beautiful beings, who ride about on fleet horses; and ill-disposed and hideous creatures,

whose heads are covered with writhing serpents instead of hair. To meet the former is considered a good augury, but the appearance of the latter presages certain misfortune.

Another and similar class of supernal beings, known by the Turkish name of Djins, attach themselves to dwellings, in which they perform the rôle generally attributed to good fairies, putting the house in order and plaiting the manes and tails of the horses in the stable. Sometimes, too, like the Nereids and Lamias of the Greeks and the Samodivas of the Bulgarians, they form matrimonial alliances with mortals. M. Hecquard[1] mentions a story of a man, living at Scutari, who declared himself to be married to one of these female Djins, who was able to fulfil every desire he expressed. However ancient or rare the coin he might show her, she always trebled it. This Djin was, according to her master's report, exceedingly jealous of mortal women, and would allow no servant in the house. Indeed, she had no need of one, for everything she or her husband required was ready to hand in a moment.

The Mauthia appears to be peculiar to Elbassan, and is described as a beautiful woman dressed in gold-gleaming garments, and wearing on her head a fez covered with jewels. The man who can succeed in getting this fez from her, whether by force or fraud, will be happy for the rest of his life. In Albanian fairy-lore the Peri, whose name is of Turkish origin, is of the masculine sex, and resembles a beautiful boy of twelve with a glistening white skin, clothed in

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[1] *La Haute Albanie*, p. 343.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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776 dainty raiment, and exhaling a fragrant odour. They live in the mountains, but after nightfall frequently approach the abodes of men in order to allure mortal youths to join their dances. If a boy so favoured keeps his own counsel, he may join in these fairy revels with impunity, but should he venture to inform others of his relations with these nocturnal visitors, they revenge themselves by killing him.

The Ore is a being who constantly wanders about in order to hear and carry into effect the blessings and curses pronounced by men on each other.
735 In North Albania the usual formula with which a beggar
789 concludes his thanks and blessings for alms received is, "May the Ore hear and bring it to pass."

Among the malevolent supernals are three kinds of man-devouring female monsters. The Koutchédra (κουτζέδρα), the Dogsuckler (συκγιννιζα), and the Liouvía (λιουβία). The first figures frequently in folk-tale, and besides her cannibalistic propensities, is credited with the power of drying up the springs and fountains at which she drinks. The Dogsuckler is endowed with four eyes, two in the front of her head, and two in the back. The Liouvía is extremely partial to the flesh of little children.

776 Diseases are generally personalised as female mon-
753 sters, whose touch is death. One of these is called in Elbassan the Phliame (φλιάμε), whose touch causes "the falling sickness." She is, however, never alluded to by name, it being said of her victim that "The Thing has attacked him." The plague and fatal epidemics generally are represented as more or less similar, but blind beings, called Koukoúdh (κουκούδ).

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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A horrible belief prevails among the Ghegs that when 776
men or women live to be a hundred years old their 753
breath becomes poisonous and kills healthy people. 761
Von Hahn says that old people suspected of causing 888
sickness in this way, especially when an epidemic is raging, have atoned for their longevity with a fiery death at the hands of their panic-stricken neighbours.[1]

A curious notion is also shared by Greeks and Albanians that shadows are capable of assuming an indepen- 776 822
dent existence, and, being malevolently disposed, are able 761
to deal men blows which usually cause their death.

The Dif, or Dev (δίφι, δίβι, διφ, δίβι), is, like the 776
Kūrdish supernal of the latter name,[2] a being possessed of extraordinary physical strength. "He is a regular Dif" is said of a remarkably strong man, as we say, "He is another Samson." According to the people of Elbassan, the Dif is an enormous giant who lives underground and never comes to the surface, [823]
and whose business it is to keep the cauldrons boiling which supply the hot and medicinal springs in the neighbourhood of that town. These springs, in com- 776
mon with those found in other parts of the country, 755
are much resorted to for curative purposes. Their waters are, however, drunk indiscriminately for all kinds of ailments, without regard to their various medicinal properties. The cures effected not being attributed to the water itself so much as to the influence of the magical beings who have their abodes in the springs and wells, people consequently go

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[1] *Albanesische Studien*, p. 163.

[2] See p. 155. Von Hahn suggests an Indian origin for this word, which, he says, he had found in no other part of Turkey. *Op. cit.* p. 162.

776 from one spring to another in the hope of propitiating
755 the various tutelary deities in charge of them.

The Dragoua are children who are born with
776 bunches of hair or feathers on their shoulders, by
845 means of which they are able to fly, or at least to take tremendous leaps. The mother of such a child must, it is said, be very careful to keep secret its peculiarities, for, should they be observed by a stranger, the child would die, and in any case it will not be long lived. On stormy nights the Dragoua leave their cradles, or beds, and, rising into the air, fight with the Koutchédras, the contest often waxing so hot that they uproot trees to use as weapons, which are, on the following morning, found strewn on the ground.

826 Another curious belief current in Albania maintains the actual existence there of men with tails,
7 either like those of goats or of horses. Persons retaining these appendages of their remote ancestors are held to be always short and broad of figure, untiring walkers, and endowed with great physical strength. Von Hahn was of opinion that this is not a mere vague popular superstition, but has a foundation in fact. "Soliman of Dragoti, one of my cavasses at Ioannina," he says,[1] "maintained that in his part of the country tailed men of this sort were often to be seen, and that he had himself a tailed cousin, whom he had often, in youth, when bathing together, pulled by this gift of nature. An even more trustworthy authority, Theodoris, who had in his younger days been a klepht on Pindus, related that in his band there was, for several years, an undersized, broad-

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[1] *Albanesische Studien*, pp. 163-4.

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shouldered, fair-complexioned man, called Kapitan Yannaki (Captain Johnny), who was reputed to possess a tail. In order to convince themselves of the truth of this report, half a dozen of his comrades (for he was uncommonly strong) had fallen upon him together when he was taking his noon-nap, and he himself had taken part in this ocular inspection. He distinctly remembered seeing a goat-like tail about four finger-breadths long, covered on the outer side with short reddish-coloured hairs." M. Von Hahn's endeavours to see for himself such a *lusus naturæ* were in vain, and the Turkish military surgeons, who inspected annually hundreds of recruits from all parts of the country, confessed that no specimen of the tailed man had ever come under their notice.

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The villagers of the Ritza tribe hold in great honour a kind of good genius of the house which they call the Vittóre (*βιττόρι*), a word which signifies "ancient," and seems to convey the idea of a survival of ancestor worship. The Vittóre is in reality a little thick snake with a speckled skin, which lives in the house walls and seldom leaves its hole. These snakes are believed to live in the same house from generation to generation. They are regarded with great reverence by the family, and especially by the women, who heap benedictions upon them, and predict joyful or sorrowful events according to the sounds made by this house genius. On hearing any unusual or unaccountable noise the women say, "It is the Vittóre." If all the members of a household die, and the house is left empty, or passes into other hands, the Vittóre, too, abandons it, never to return. When an old and much

776 respected woman dies, the friends who come to offer
825 their condolences say to her relatives, "She was the Vittóre of the house."

In Elbassan the Vittóre also conveys the idea of a good genius, though the snake element is absent, and a wife who has presented her husband with a large family of sons is designated by this name.

775 Vampire beliefs are, generally speaking, more or less the same in Albania as in the rest of Turkey. The hair and beard of the "Restless One" are believed to grow in the tomb, and any one bending over the grave may hear him rattle and grind his teeth. Some
754 men are also held to possess the propensities of
774 vampires before death, and to be in the habit of unconsciously going forth by night to suck the blood of children and young maidens.

775 Strangely enough, in Elbassan and the neighbourhood, Von Hahn found no traces of the Vampire (βρυκολακ) pure and simple, as he elsewhere exists. Two connected species, however, came under his notice, the Lougát (λουγάτ) and the Karkantsoli (καρκαντσολι). The first was described as the corpse of a Turk with finger- and toe-nails of prodigious length, which, wrapped in its winding-sheet, roams about at night devouring everything it finds, and strangling any human being unfortunate enough to cross its path. The name of Lougát is also given generally in Northern Albania to a class of uncanny apparitions, which are believed to be the bewitched forms of persons who have led evil lives. These have the faculty of changing their forms with surprising and confusing rapidity, appearing successively as

charred corpses, howling like wolves, donkeys, 775
pigs, black cats, crows, oil-jars, brooms, &c. The Karkantsoli is the reanimated corpse of a Gipsy, which is believed to wander about, more especially during [761]
January nights, ridden by cats, and slaying men with its poisonous breath.

In Albania, as in all the remoter parts of Turkey, 172
there is no Pelasgian ruin to which is not attached 776
some legend of a treasure hidden, and either "guarded
by word and by spell," or placed in the safe keeping 789
of a gigantic Negro, Djin, or other Supernal. Those who have concealed treasure in such places have also, it is believed, fixed the time at which it may be brought to light, and have left to their heirs a document containing a description of the hiding-place, the formula of the magic spell pronounced over it at the moment of burial, with the year, day, and hour, on which alone it can be recovered.[1] At the appointed time the heir goes to the spot indicated, pronounces the mysterious words, and the treasure immediately rises to the surface. Sometimes, however, the treasure is buried in such a way that, at the appointed time, it rises spontaneously to the surface, and any one finding it may appropriate it. The lucky person must, however, be careful to keep his own counsel in the matter, or he will be punished by finding the gold turned to charcoal, and will not long survive the incident. When the treasure is in the keeping of a Negro, he 776
occasionally spreads it out in the sunshine in order that it may not be damaged by the damp, and, at the

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[1] Compare the Kŭrdish story of "The Armenian and the Dervish," p. 169.

776 appointed time, he never fails to bring it permanently to the surface.

776 825 A story is told of a shepherd who, when pasturing his sheep in Dibra, saw one day a snake curled up asleep on a great heap of gold. In order to induce him to leave it, the shepherd fetched a pail of milk, which he placed near the snake, and then retired to a little distance to watch his movements. As he had calculated, the snake gorged himself with the milk, and then returned to sleep on the gold heap. But the quantity of milk he had drunk made him thirsty and uneasy, and he wriggled and wriggled and could not rest. Finally he went off to get some water, and, the spring being at some distance, before he returned the shepherd had removed the whole of the treasure to a place of safety. What the snake did when he came back and found his property gone, the story omits to mention.

776 The Tosks hold that hidden treasures are guarded by fire-breathing winged snakes with human faces. These creatures they, however, call by the Greek name of Stoichiò (στοιχιὸ), which signifies generally an elemental spirit. On the eve of Sunday the Stoichiò relaxes its vigilance, and the treasure may then be seized by a bold and enterprising individual.

787 The existence of a treasure, and the spot where it is to be found, are held to be frequently revealed in dreams, which are repeated on three consecutive nights. As in the above-mentioned case, should the fortunate person take another into his confidence, the gold turns to charcoal and his days are numbered. The Albanian women, however, who are learned in the expounding of dreams, say that, as a rule, they go by contraries.

The *Ghiak*, the terrible blood feud, or vendetta, 775 628 before alluded to, may possibly, as suggested by Wassa Effendi, have been in its origin a sacrifice to the *manes* of murdered relatives. As the numerous class of vampire stories tends to show, the ancient belief that those who have died by violence cannot rest quietly in their graves still survives, and the slaying of their murderer, or at least of one of his kindred or clan, would thus be rather an act of religious duty towards the dead than of vengeance on the part of the living.

The majority of the ailments which afflict mankind 753 are believed by the Albanians to be caused by magical influences, and I shall now proceed to give some illustrations of their folk-remedies. These are usually 755 accompanied by some form of incantation, the secret of which is possessed only by some wise-woman who has inherited it from her mother, and who, in her turn, imparts it to her daughter. If, for instance, a person believes himself to have received a blow from one of the invisible Vilas, or some other supernal being, he [753] has recourse to the witch-wife, who, after dressing the [776] patient in white garments, conducts him to an uninhabited house in a retired situation. On arriving, she greets the mysterious powers whom she believes to be invisibly present. She then places her patient in a suppliant posture, gives him rose-water to drink, and both observe a solemn silence for some ten minutes, during which she makes certain mysterious signs and motions. After wishing the Vilas good-night, the witch-wife leads her patient home by a circuitous road.

Sometimes a circle is drawn round a person so afflicted,

755 in which he remains seated three days, at the end of which time he is washed with "unspoken-over" water.[1] This, which is also called by an Albanian word signifying "stolen," is water drawn from the well or fountain in silence and carried home without the bearer having spoken, or been spoken to, on the way, and it is believed to possess highly salutary virtues. Into the water some "sweet" or "heavy" leaves are thrown, the number and also the kind being determined by fixed rules according to the nature of
[137
245] the malady. Among the "sweet" leaves are those of the pomegranate, apple, and rose trees, and also, strange to say, of nettles; among the "heavy," those of the laurel, cypress, ivy, and other evergreens. Three days after such an ablution the patient is expected
[782] either to recover or to die. Should he be able to indicate the spot on which he received the blow, the earth is there sprinkled with rose-water in order to appease the offended beings, who are said to be extremely fond of this scent; or he there throws down something, the nature of which is known only to himself, in the belief that the malady from which he suffers will be transferred to the being who may chance to tread upon it.

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754 The effects of the evil eye are also removed by sprinkling the patient with "unspoken-over" water, three nettle stalks being dipped into it for that purpose, and giving him to eat three mulberry buds, the mulberry tree being one of the sovereign antidotes for that much dreaded influence.

755 Rheumatism in the hands or feet is cured by

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[1] Such water is also used by the Greeks, who call it *νερὸ ἀμίλητον*.

bathing the affected member three times in warm water, rubbing it with salt, and finally passing over it the blade of a knife with the words, "As this salt melts, so may the evil melt!" The house is then swept with a new broom, the sweeper saying as the dust is swept out, "So may all evil be swept away!" 755

If ringworm (οὔθι) appears with the new, it may be made to disappear with the waning moon, by covering the place with wood ashes, and repeating at the same time the charm:

Came the spot and made him foul,
Came the ash and made him whole.[1]

The remedy for the bite of a tarantula is to place the sufferer on a heap of dung, while nine women bearing the name of Maro[2] sit round him in a circle and chant the following incantation:— 136 164

Nine Maros here are we,
And but one art thou.
Thou hast worked, thy work succeeds;
We have worked without success.
Evil hast thou wrought,
Good do thou now work,
O mistress spider![3]

When an Albanian wife has no children, or is the mother of girls only, she, like her Greek sister, attributes her misfortune to some enemy of her family having tied together a number of nettles with this object, and has recourse to counter-spells in order to 842

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[1] Ερδ οὔθι ε περσεύθ
Ερδ χίρι ε περπίν (lit. "drank it up").

[2] Perhaps, like the similar Greek name, a form of Maria or Mary.

[3] Tarantulas are called by the Albanians by the generic name for spider μεριμάγκε. Comp. Von Hahn's *Albanesische Studien*, p. 157.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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842 remove the charm. If an Albanian, having lost his first wife, marries a second in what the relatives of the deceased may consider indecent haste, they revenge themselves upon him by pouring water upon the grave of his dead wife, in the belief that this will have the effect of causing his second spouse to be childless.

761 751 Among the Christian Tosks, if two or more children of a family have died in infancy, the next born baby is passed three times through a kind of iron tripod. If yet another child dies, the next baby is placed where four roads meet, a silver cross, for which nine women who bear the name of Maro have given the metal, is laid on its body, and the first passer-by is [608] asked to be godfather or godmother to it.

782 In some places, the neighbourhood of Dibra, for instance, black sheep are said to be sacrificed by witch-wives for the benefit of sick persons. Similar sacrifices appear to be now substituted for those of human beings, who, in the popular traditions of the Albanians, [491] as in those of other nations, are said to have been formerly buried under the foundations of important buildings;[1] for Von Hahn relates that, during the present century, when a new bridge was about to be built by the Governor-General's orders over the rapid river Arcen, twelve sheep were sacrificed, their heads being buried under the piers, in order that they might be able to withstand the force of the current.

789 731 When swarms of locusts or cockchafers, as some-

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[1] See, for instance, the Greek song of "The Bridge of Arta," *Greek Folk-songs*, p. 81; and "The Monastery of Argis" in Alexandri's *Ballades de la Roumanie*.

times happens, are ravaging the country, a number of 789
women assemble, and, having captured some of the 731
insects, form a mock funeral procession, and, with hair dishevelled, proceed to drown them in the nearest well or stream, singing in turn as they go the following dirge, which is repeated by the others in chorus:

> O locusts! O cockchafers! parents kind,
> Orphaned you have left us all behind!

This ceremony is believed to cause the death of the rest of the destructive swarm.

If one of a herd of cattle dies, its head is buried in 782
the farmyard in order that a similar fate may not befall 231
the rest of the herd. When an ox or cow is ill, "unspoken-over" water is brought and sprinkled over it. If several of the cattle are ailing, and in other cases of a serious nature, the water used is brought from three different wells or springs, and mixed together, its efficacy being believed to be thus increased to a threefold degree.

Very numerous are the ceremonies observed with 789
the object of ensuring good, or averting bad, luck. In 484
Northern Albania, when a youth, or man, is about to leave his home for a distant town a curious ceremony is performed, which is believed to ensure him a safe and successful journey. In front of the house-door the women place a jar filled with "unspoken-over" water, decorated with foliage and hung with earrings of gold and silver. The traveller touches the jar with his foot, takes in his hand the earrings and some of the foliage, and sets out, accompanied for a mile or two by his relatives, to whom, when they finally take

789 leave of him, he returns the earrings. It is considered 484 a bad omen for the journey if the traveller should for any reason turn or look back. If he have left anything behind, he sends another to fetch it; and should a friend or stranger call to him from behind, he will not turn back to meet him, but remain standing where he is until the other comes up, a practice which foreigners, not understanding the reason for it, have [777] put down to discourtesy. If on the road the traveller meets a fox, or a flock of sheep, he considers it a good augury; a flock of goats, however, or a hare crossing the road, is held to signify ill luck.

778 Travellers in Upper Albania may frequently see 775 stones placed in the forks or hollows of roadside trees. According to M. Hecquard,[1] this practice originates in 484 the belief that the stones serve as resting-places for the feet of those unhappy beings for whom the rites of sepulture have not been properly performed, and who, while wandering in mid-air, can alight upon them as on the solid earth. To place a stone on a tree is also said in some mysterious way to diminish the fatigue of the pedestrian, and help him on his journey.

787 Omens and auguries, too, both good and evil, are drawn from all the trifling occurrences of every-day life, as well as from the observation of the phenomena of Nature, besides being sought for in the bones and entrails of slaughtered sheep and in the flight of birds. Among the omens read in the actions of the domestic animals are the following. When introducing a newly purchased cow into the farmyard, some object, made of iron or silver, is placed across the gateway

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[1] *La Haute Albanie.*

through which the animal is led. If the cow steps 787 over the object with the right hoof, it is considered a good augury; if with the left, the omen is unfavourable. If a hen shakes her feathers in the house, or if one of her feathers hangs askew without falling, it foretells the arrival of a friend, or the receipt of news from an absent relative. Should the hen crow like a cock without turning its head to the East, it signifies a death or other serious misfortune. If, during the night, a cock crows at an unusual hour, it is either a sign of a change in the weather, or that important news will arrive in the morning. [843] To an expectant mother, however, it announces that her child will be a boy. Should the dog howl while looking away from the dwelling, it is a sign of death; and if the cat mews repeatedly, that a member of the family will shortly fall ill. If, however, she licks herself frequently, it is merely a sign of rain.

Cats, I may here remark, are treated with great 231 kindness by the Albanians, who, it is said, are not 825 in the habit of laying to their charge the smashing of crockery, or the disappearance of provisions. According to a myth current among the Albanian highlanders, the cat was created by Jesus, who produced one from the sleeve of His mantle when dining in a house infested with mice. To kill a cat is consequently [577] considered a most reprehensible action. When such a family pet dies, the children of the 766 house call in their friends to assist in pussy's obsequies, and, after she has been carried in solemn procession to the grave, the little party sit down to a funeral feast, for which the mother willingly furnishes the necessary viands.

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The cries of wild beasts and birds, and also the circumstances under which they are heard, or the animals themselves met with, have also their signification. If wolves howl in packs, it betokens, in some districts, a death; in others, severe frost. To meet a snake before sunrise, or about sunset, augurs the death of a relative. If the turtle-dove, which in Middle Albania builds in the towns and villages, sits on a roof and coos, it announces to the inmates the return of a relative from a foreign land. When a cuckoo, however, sits there and sings, or an owl hoots there, it betokens a death in the house. The croak of a raven in the vicinity of a house, or the hoot of an owl, announces to the expectant mother the birth of a girl. Sparrows flying in large flocks are held to be a sign of severe cold.

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Various auguries are also drawn from the arrival in spring of the birds of passage, and the circumstances under which they are first seen. For instance, to see the first swallow or turtle-dove before breaking one's fast in the morning portends sickness. Accordingly, about the time when these birds are expected, and more particularly on the 1st of May, the precaution is taken of placing by the bedside a small piece of bread, which is eaten immediately on awakening in order to avoid any such risk. In Northern Albania, on the contrary, it is held that to see while fasting the first swallow brings luck. Here, too, when a mother, whose child has been born with a running sore, sees the first stork, she places on her baby's head a stone, saying:

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Head thy poultice,
Head this stone.[1]

A few of the trifling occurrences of every-day life to which a superstitious significance is attached by the Albanians have their parallels in our own country. We say, for instance, when seized by a sudden shiver, "Some one is walking over my grave;" while an Albanian says, "Death is calling me," and mentally replies, "I am not yet ready." When attacked with a fit of hiccough, the Albanian believes that some friend is speaking of him, and calls over the names of all his relatives and acquaintances, in the belief that the one he mentions with the last hiccough will be the one who has uttered his name. If the eye itches, it denotes coming rain; if the right hand, vexation consequent on being called upon to pay money; if the left, the receipt of money; itching of the lips signifies the arrival of a friend or relative; of the nose, strife and discord. Humming in the right ear is looked upon as a good omen, and in the left the reverse. If a little child drops asleep just before a meal, the incident is regarded as most propitious for the whole household. 787

In addition to the every-day observances with respect to auspicious and inauspicious actions and events, so many are attached to certain seasons and days of the year as to form quite a Calendar of Superstitions. Some tribes, the Ritza, for example, celebrate their New Year's Day on the 1st of September, and every 527 777

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[1] Κρυε τετ κιύιλ,
κρυε τεμ γύυρ.

527 incident that occurs during its twelve hours is
777 believed to presage the events of the corresponding
months of the coming year, and the events of the first
day of each month the character, lucky or unlucky, of
the other days generally. It is unlucky to work in the
[461] fields during the first week of October, and no corn
is sown this month, as the crop would be sure to fail.

527 The period between the 15th of November and
777 the 6th of January is, like the Greek *Fishoti* and
776 the Bulgarian *Kulada*,[1] supposed to be the carnival
784 time of the Vilas and other supernal beings, who
are, at that season, not only more active, but more
powerful than at others, and especially during the
night. After sunset, consequently, people refrain
from going abroad, or drinking water, for fear of
mischief, and give no credence to their dreams. They
are also careful not to leave any article of wearing apparel
[296] out of doors after nightfall, and if, by some
oversight, a garment should be so left, it is washed
before being used, in order to get rid of any spell cast
upon it by the supernals.

527 Christmas, which bears a name (*Kolendravet*[2]) apparently
777 connected with those by which it is known
among the Bulgarians and Vlachs, is observed with
ceremonies that recall those of more Northern nations,
as well as with some similar to those of their last-mentioned
neighbours. On the 24th and 25th of

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[1] Vol. i. pp. 123 and 329.

[2] Von Hahn derives this name from the *κολλίνδρα*, the ring-shaped cakes made at this season. I would, however, suggest the greater likelihood of the cakes having been named after the name of the feast in its various forms of (Albanian) *Kolendravet*, (Vlach) *Kolindi*, and (Bulgarian) *Kulada*.

December the housewife makes, besides other sweet 527
cakes, some in the shape of rings, which are called 777
Koléndhra. The one first made is termed "the cake of the oxen," and is hung up on the wall "for luck," and left there until the farmer goes out with his team to the fields. On this occasion the cake is taken down and broken to pieces on the head of one of the yoked oxen, and then divided between the pair.

Fire-ceremonies play a great part in the Christmas 789
observances of the Albanian highlanders. As may 787
have already been remarked in connection with birth-
ceremonies, a protective and salutary character appears 372
to attach to the fire on the hearth, and not only on such occasions, but on the eve of every important festival, the Albanian peasants light fires and keep them burning until sunset on the following day, even in summer; and from the crackling, or exploding, noises emitted by the wood in burning, they learn when the enemies of their house are conspiring against them, and whether the flocks will thrive, or the contrary. On ordinary occasions they consider it inauspicious when the thick end of a log burns before the thin, and are careful not to place one log across another. On 789
Christmas Eve, however, all such precautions are con- 372
sidered unnecessary. The fire is piled up as high as the safety of the house will permit, as this is supposed to neutralise all evil effects of the non-observance of the foregoing precautions during the coming year. The largest log that can be found is brought home at sunset, when all the family, who are reunited for the festival, rise to greet it with the words, "Welcome, our log! God has destined thee for the fire! Bring

789 good luck to us and to our flocks!" Before the
372 family sit down to supper a small quantity of food
from every dish on the table is placed upon the burning log. Some branches of a cherry tree are also put on the fire, and, when partially burnt, are taken off again and kept.

857 Soon after midnight, the boys, in companies of from
533 ten to fifteen, go singing from house to house, and
receive, in reward for their carols, a ring-cake from each housewife.

527 On the Eve of St. Basil (January 1) the fire is
789 also kept burning all night, and the half-burnt cherry
787 branches are again thrown on and withdrawn, to be
[372] wholly consumed on the Eve of the Epiphany, when
the ashes are collected and strewn in the vineyard. The fire of St. Basil's Eve is often watched by an expectant mother, who thus hopes to ensure an easy confinement. In the morning people wash themselves and their children with "unspoken-over" water, and draw omens from the character, gay or sad, of the person who first enters the house. A cock is also sacrificed, for it is auspicious to spill blood in the house on St. Basil's Day.

789 On the Eve of Epiphany the fire is also kept alight
[787] all night, and in the morning the character of the
coming seasons is prophesied from the set of the wind. If a south wind blows, it indicates a full harvest and sickness; if the wind is from the east, a scanty harvest and a healthy year are predicted; if from the north, a late spring. The Christians, on the Feast of Epiphany, sprinkle their vineyards with holy water, in the hope of ensuring a plentiful crop of

grapes. They also place at the four corners of each 789
plot four vine stems tied together with straw bands,
and under them a piece of a cake called a *kophtopite*,
made specially for the purpose, wine being one of its
ingredients. A round loaf is rolled from the gate to
the middle of the vineyard, and then distributed to
the ravens, crows, and other birds which damage the
grapes, with this invitation, "Assemble, O crows and
ravens, so that we may eat and drink, and that you
may do us no more harm!"

On the 1st of February, St. Tryphon's Day, it is 789
considered lucky to work in the fields, but not in the 787
vineyards. On the 2nd, the "Feast of the Purification," [372]
all kinds of small pulse and cereals are
cooked together in a pot, and this mess, called *karkasina*,
forms the staple food of the day. On the eve
of the 1st of March, a kind of divination is performed
by throwing into the fire a particular kind of leaf and
pronouncing at the same time the name of a member
of the family. If the leaf makes an explosive noise
while burning, it is held to be a good omen for the
person indicated, but if it burns quietly, the reverse.[1]
On this vigil a clod of earth, on which a few drops of
wolf's milk have been sprinkled, is thrown against
the door in order that the cows and goats may milk
well. In the morning the cattle are whipped with
cherry branches, in order that they may enjoy good [515]
health, and people wash themselves with wine with a
view to preserving themselves from vermin during
the summer. As an additional precaution, they also 789
catch a flea, which they impale on the point of a new

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[1] The ancient φυλλομαντεία.

789 needle, a warning evidently to other fleas of the fate
awaiting them.

The women in South Albania twist together a
[751] number of coloured threads and tie them round the chil-
dren's wrists and necks, in order to preserve them from
sunburn or sunstroke, and draw a similar thread along
the threshold of the house. They also roll up tightly
little balls of rag, at which they stitch assiduously with
a needle and thread; and when asked what they are
doing, they reply, "We are sewing up the plague,
snakes, and sickness." On this day no vegetables are
eaten, the sweet cakes and dishes, in which the
Ritza alone indulge, being believed to ensure a good
[777] summer. The whole of this month is a close time for
the ravens, as to kill one would bring bad luck to the
vintage.

527 The North Albanians begin their year on the 1st
789 of March. On this day the cattle are decked with gar-
777 lands of flowers, and the Ghegs not only tie threads of
many colours on the wrists and necks of their children,
[805] but themselves also wear one of red silk on the little
finger of the right hand and the great toe of the right
foot. When the first swallow has been seen, they take
off these threads, and hang them on the rose-bushes, in
order that the swallows may take them to their nests.
[177] Von Hahn is of opinion that this graceful little cus-
tom is not indigenous, and it may indeed have been
partly borrowed, either from the Bulgarians, or,
through the neighbouring Vlachs, from the Roumanians, with whom, as I have already mentioned,[1] a
similar usage exists. While I was at Salonica, one

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[1] Vol. I. p. 335.

of these parti-coloured bracelets, with a tiny gold coin 527
attached, was, on the 1st of March (Old Style), presented 789
by the Roumanian Consul-General to each lady 777
of his acquaintance, and I, for one, religiously wore my charm against the power of the March sun, which in the East generally is said to "blacken" the complexion, until the month was out. It was not, however, finally thrown to the swallows, but carried off by an English visitor as a curio.

On the 25th of this month the women go through 789
the house beating on copper pans, in order to drive out any poisonous snakes that may have intended to take up their abode there. The two last days of March and the first of April are called *Plyáketé*, a word signifying "old," and referring to the past season, personified as "Old Mother Winter." If by [754]
the last-mentioned date Spring has not yet fully set in, the blame is laid at the door of the old women, who are evidently held to be in league with "Old Mother Winter."

On Easter Eve in some places, Selitza, for instance, 789
the young men assemble with lighted torches, which [372]
they wave about as they walk in procession through the village. Arrived at the river, they throw them in, crying, "*Koré-ya* (O Maiden)! We throw thee into the water with these torches, so mayest thou never
return!" the *Koré* evidently referring, as Von [776]
Hahn suggests,[1] to the malevolent supernals, Vilas, Dragouas, &c., before described. When the priest
comes to bless the house on Easter Day, the women [788]
throw after him, as he leaves, hot embers from the

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[1] *Albanesische Studien*, p. 160.

789 hearth, in order that he may take away with him all
788 danger from fire for the coming year.

St. John's Eve is observed in Albania with the
789 customary bonfire, to leap over which is considered so
372 salutary that even the old people venture to do so
at least once. A curious ceremony, performed about
this season, when the spring sowing is concluded,
may also be here mentioned. Standing with his
back to the plough, the farmer rubs part of the
[136] handle with earth in the belief that the wild swine
will thus be prevented from damaging his crops.

789 On the day on which the new moon is first seen, all
possible work is avoided, and no important task of
any kind, such as ploughing, sowing, or harvesting,
is commenced, for it would be sure to be unsuccessful.
The girls and children look at the moon through a
sieve, and rub their faces with a piece of silver, while
they sing:

[539] Young moon!
Young maid!
Health to me;
Ill to thee!
Head as soft as dough be thine!
Head as hard as stone be mine!

777 The 9th, 19th, and 29th days of every month are
considered unlucky, as is also the Tuesday of every
week, for setting out on a journey, or commencing
any kind of work. Friday is also an inauspicious day
[241] for sowing, and Saturday for beginning to plough
or dig.

CHAPTER XII.

ALBANIAN WOMEN: THEIR FOLK-POESY—FOLK-TALES.

THE subject of Albanian folk-lore attracted many 114
years ago the attention of Von Hahn, whose *Albanesische Studien* and *Griechische und Albanesische Märchen* are well known to folk-lorists throughout Europe. Other collections have since been made by French and Italian students of the language and lore of the Skipetars, not only in their native land, but also in their colonies in Italy, Sicily, and the Greek Islands, where, though long settled, they still remain a distinct race.[1]

Long contact with the neighbouring Greeks has, 538
in South Albania, naturally resulted in much inter- 177
borrowing of folk-tales, and it is often difficult to determine to which nationality a story originally belonged. M. Dozon finds also traces of a Slav origin in several tales contained in his collection, which may have been introduced either by the Bulgarians of Upper Macedonia, or by the Montenegrin settlers in Northern Albania. The pious Pagano-
Christian element, as M. Dozon calls the legends of [773]
Saints which are found both in Greek and Armenian

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[1] See, for instance, Jubany, *Raccolta, &c.*; and Dozon, *Contes Albanais* and *Manuel de la Langue Chkipe*. A small collection, untranslated, referred to by M. Dozon as *L'Abeille Chkipe*, but of which I have not been able to learn the exact title, has also been published at Cairo.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

538 folk-tales, is, however, almost entirely absent from
177 those of the Albanians. Of the so-called religious
773 legends current among the Skipetars, some are of Christian and others of Moslem origin. The following explanation, given by the highlanders, of the
[262] reason for the Moslem's distaste for pork, savours, however, rather of Bektashí scepticism. One day, they say, Mohammed went out in company with a Christian on a thieving expedition. Finding nothing else to lay their hands upon, the pair took possession of a sow, which, having killed, they proceeded to divide by drawing lots. As luck would have it, the head, shoulders, and best parts of the carcase fell to the Christian, while the Prophet received as his portion only the tail and the hams. Discontented with his share of the spoil, Mohammed proclaimed the pig unclean, and forbade his followers to eat thenceforward of its flesh.[1]

538 Some of the sayings proverbially current among
773 the Albanians have their origin in myths, which are for the most part of a religious character. The phrase, "The drop has fallen," used with reference to any one who has died suddenly, with the connected imprecation, "May the drop fall on thee!" are thus explained. While the rebellious angels were falling
[776] from heaven into the abyss, the angel Gabriel called a halt, and every one stopped exactly where he happened to be at that moment. Some had already reached the regions below the earth, others were on the earth itself, while a third section were still in mid-air, where they have remained suspended ever

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[1] Compare Hecquard, *La Haute Albanie*, p. 510.

since. If the tears of remorse which they are continually shedding happen to fall upon a human being he dies instantaneously. "Suspended devils" also occur in the Armenian legend of the Fall, already related.[1] 538 773

The saying, "Eat him, wolf, and make him burst, O Michael," refers to the part played by Satan in the following legend. When God created Adam, Satan, after inspecting him, observed that he did not think highly of His handiwork, and believed himself capable of producing something better. The Lord took Satan's remarks in good part, and gave him leave to try his hand at creation. Satan then kneaded some dough, as he had seen the Lord do, and fashioned it into the shape of a wolf, which he asserted to be equal to God's handiwork. "Thou must give thy creature life," said the Lord to him, "as I have given to mine." So Satan set about doing this, and he blew into the wolf till his black head became red and blue, but to no purpose, for it still remained lifeless. The Lord, finally becoming weary of his vain attempts, struck the wolf on the side with a staff and gave him life. Hence it is that the wolf has a hollow beneath his ribs. God then said to the wolf, "Creature, devour thy creator." What the Archangel Michael has to do with the story does not, however, appear.[2]

Another legend concerning the Devil describes him as fastened by a chain of enormous strength to a rock. The whole year through he gnaws at the links, 538 776

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[1] Vol. i. p. 272.

[2] Von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, p. 165.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

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which, by Easter Eve, have become very thin. On the morning of Easter Sunday, however, the Saviour arrives with a new chain with which He again secures Satan to the rock.

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A graceful little myth is related in some parts of Albania concerning the origin of the Cuckoo and the *Gyon*, or *Gyonit*, which is, I believe, a species of small owl. The story goes that the cuckoo and the gyon were brother and sister, and had a brother named Gyon, who had been killed. Various causes are assigned for his death in the different versions of the story, that current among the Ritza tribe being that he was accidentally stabbed by his brother with a pair of scissors. In order the better to mourn his loss, the surviving brother was changed into the bird gyon, and the sister into a cuckoo. And so the gyon calls his brother all night long by his name, "*Gyon, Gyon!*" and the cuckoo in the daytime sings, "*Kou! Kou!*" which means, "Where art thou?"[1] In Elbassan, however, it is also said that the sister was changed into the blue flower, which is called the "cuckoo flower," or "cuckoo's bread," and when a woman finds this flower in the field she sings:

Cuckoo, cuckoo, more than cuckoo,
Saw'st thou me?
Saw I thee?
Saw'st thou thy dear brother, Gyon?
How they slew him like an ox?
Blood a spoonful,
Flesh a cupful;
Give me both thine hands!

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857]
[1] It has occurred to me that the call of "Cuckoo," used by children both in the East and in the West when playing hide-and-seek, may have its origin in some such bird legend.

She then takes hold of the flower with both hands 539
and lays her head upon it.

Almost every Albanian tribe has a more or less 173
mythical tradition of its origin, which is generally traced to some single ancestor. Of these I have already mentioned two, the legends of the Miridite clans of the Clementi and the Castrati. Another tradition, however, traces the descent of the entire tribe of the Miridites from one man, who, like the favourite hero of fairy tales generally, was the youngest of three sons. His father, according to the story, lived on Mount Pastrik, near Diakova, and at his death the three brothers divided their poor inheritance, the eldest taking the saddle (*Shalla*), the second the sieve (*Shosh*), the third receiving only the salutation of "Good-day" (*Mir día*). As is, however, always the case in such stories, the prosperity of the portionless one greatly excelled that of his brothers. For while they became the founders of the clans called Shialla and Shoshi, in remembrance of the saddle and sieve they had respectively inherited, he who had been dismissed with an ironical salutation bequeathed it as a name to a far more numerous and powerful tribe, the *Miridites*.

Out of so many charming folk-tales it is a difficult 114
matter to choose the best or most characteristically 538
Albanian. I have, however, limited myself to those [121]
of which the originals are available, in order to obtain the precise names of the Supernals described in them, many of whom are disguised by their French translator under the name of *Lamie*, and by Von Hahn under the Teutonic *Elfe* or *Kobold*. As mentioned in

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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114 538 the previous chapter, most of these magical beings have their equivalents in Greek folk-lore, but the Liouvía is peculiar to Albania, and has, so far, been found only in two stories, the following, and that entitled "Perseus" by Von Hahn.[1] The "Beauty 538 of the Earth," or "The World," is the subject of other stories, both Albanian and Greek, and also occurs in Greek folk-song under the same title.[2] This story, however, has a parallel in the Epirote Greek tale of "The King's Son and the Beardless One," in which the hero, a king's son, is personated by a beardless muleteer, a blind *Drache* being substituted for the Liouvía, and an old lame horse for the old man of the Albanian version. The king's son throws pieces of meat to the *Drache*, who recovers his sight, and out of gratitude swallows the hero, who, while in the creature's stomach, learns the language of birds, an attainment which afterwards serves him in good stead. In one of the Greek variants the Beauty is described as "The Golden-haired One," and all the maidens of the town form her train.[3] The incident of stealing the magic dress occurs also in the Bulgarian song of "The Samodiva Married against her Will."[4]

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[1] *Griechische und Albanesische Märchen*, No. 98.

[2] See Passow, *Carmina, &c.* : Ἡ *ὡραία τοῦ κόσμου.*

[3] Von Hahn, *Griechische und Albanesische Märchen*; and the story of "The Twins" in Νεοελληνικὰ Παραμύθια.

[4] See vol. i. p. 352.

The Liouvia[1] *and the Beauty of the Earth.*[2]

There was once a Vlach[3] who was very rich and 539 had a big sheep farm. A king once happened to be travelling that way, and stopped at his house, and the Vlach gave him the best of all he had. That same night the Vlach's wife gave birth to a son. The king made the father promise to have his son taught various languages, and gave him a cross, saying, "When thy son is fifteen years old, give him this cross and tell him to come to me in such and such a town." This said, he went away.

The Vlach did as the king had advised, and the boy learnt to speak several languages. On his fifteenth birthday, his father gave him the cross. He read the inscription it bore, which was, "I am the king, thy godfather; come to me in such and such a town." When he had read it, he said to his father:

"See what the king has written for me. I must go to him."

So the father gave him a companion.

On the way, the boy, being hungry, descended a ravine, at the bottom of which was a spring. When he had finished his meal, he saw his companion standing on the top of a rock with a great stone in his hand, and heard him say:

"Take off thy clothes, give them to me, and take mine; then swear that thou wilt reveal to no man what has passed between us." [788]

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[1] This appears to me the most correct way of rendering phonetically the word *Λιουβία*.

[2] Doson, *Manuel Chkipe*, No. xvi., and *Contes Albanais*, No. xii.

[3] See vol. i. chap. i., "The Vlachs."

539 The boy pronounced this oath, "If I die and come
788 to life again, then only will I denounce thee."

When they had changed dresses, the companion mounted the horse, and they arrived at the king's palace. The latter, on seeing the cross, took the youth who presented it for his godson, and, giving him his hand, led him to his private apartment. As to the son of the Vlach, he remained in the basement, and spoke to each person there in his own language.

539 The companion pretended to be ill. The king went to see him, and asked him what he ailed.

"I feel very ill," he replied.

"What shall we do for you?"

"Get me one of the cabbages guarded by the Liouvía."

"So many kings, and so many more powerful than I, have gone to take one, and have never succeeded," replied the king.

"Command the youth who is downstairs to go. If he refuses, threaten him."

Then the king said to the boy, "Willy, nilly, thou must go to such and such a place, and bring back a cabbage" (the companion pretended to be ill because he knew that if the son of the Vlach went for the cabbage, he would never come back).

The boy passed his days and nights in weeping, and knew not what to do. One night he saw in a dream an old man, who said to him, "My son, dry thy tears; this is what thou must do. Take forty loads of honey and forty loads of milk, and manage to arrive about noon, for then the Liouvía is out hunting, and is not in her den."

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The next morning the youth asked the king for the provisions mentioned by the old man, and set out. On the road he met the old man he had seen in his dream. Said he, "Good luck, my son. But be sure when you get there to sweep out the lair of the Liouvía; then mix together the honey and the milk, and hide thee close by. When the Liouvía comes, she will eat half the honey and milk, and then she will leave her den, saying, 'Let him to whom I owe this kindness show himself; I would see him.' Then," continued the old man, "when she has said this, leave thy hiding-place, and say, 'Here I am.' She will ask thee how she can reward thee. Reply that thou wouldst have a cabbage, and she will give thee leave to choose one. Choose three of the finest, and eat them thyself, for they are very wholesome, and on thy way back come to me, and I will give thee another for the invalid."

The young man did precisely what the old man advised. In the afternoon, just two hours before sunset, the Liouvía came home, making known her approach by the noise she made in lashing her tail. She ate half of what the youth had brought, and then came out, saying, "Let him to whom I owe this kindness show himself," and the youth came out, saying, "Here I am," and it all fell out as the old man had foretold.

When they had become better acquainted, the Liouvía said to the boy, "You can come here as often as you like, and without fear." (Now this was the road that led to the abode of the Beauty of the Earth.) He then took his cabbages and left, and on

539 the way back he met the old man, who gave him what he had promised. When he arrived he gave it to the king.

The patient ate the cabbage, and declared himself cured; but, after a few days, he pretended to have a relapse. The king having asked him what he should do for him, he replied, " What I require is the Beauty of the Earth; tell this boy to go and fetch her."

"So many kings have gone, and have never returned."

"Well, if he refuses to go, threaten him."

The youth passed the day in tears, and knew not what to do. But at night the old man again appeared to him in a dream, and said, "Dry thy tears; this is what thou must do. Ask of the king a thousand lambs, four rams, a hundred loads of wheat, a hundred of honey, and ten brooms. On arriving kill the lambs, but it must be at noon, for then the wild beasts are not on guard, save the lions. There are two doors, one within the other, each guarded by two lions. When thou hast passed the outer door, throw the lambs to the eagles, the wheat to the ants, the honey to the bees; and when thou comest to the inner door, throw the four rams to the lions. Then enter without fear, but do not forget to sweep the walls, or they will fall upon you and crush you, and when you come to the door of the Beauty's room, you must sweep that too. All these animals, after having eaten, will ask thee what recompense they can make for what you have done for them. Ask of the lions a hair, of the bees, the ants, and the eagles, a feather each.

The youth did all that the old man told him. After eating, the animals cried, "Show thyself, O our benefactor; we would see thee!"

When he showed himself, they gave him a hair and three feathers, saying, "Each time that thou requirest our services, burn a feather or a hair, and we will be with thee."

Armed with the hair and the feathers, the youth, after having carefully swept the door, entered the apartment of the Beauty of the Earth. The Beauty soon appeared, attended by eleven maidens, and asked him, "Who art thou? What seekest thou here?"

"I am a man, as you may see, and I have come to carry thee off."

"So many others," she replied, laughing, "have come, and have not been able to carry me off." Then, going out of the room, she called the lions and asked them, "Why did you let this man come in?"

"Because," they answered, "we only get from you bad meat, and very little of that, while he has given a whole ram to each of us."

She then asked the eagles, "Why did you let this man come in?"

"Because," they replied, "he gave to each of us a lamb, while you left us without any food."

She next asked the same question of the bees and the ants. The former replied, "You gave us but wax, and he has given us honey;" and the latter, "You gave us only crumbs of mouldy bread, and he has given us corn."

She then asked the walls and doors, "Why did you let him come in?"

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"Because," they replied, "thou hast never swept us, while he has made us clean."

Then the Beauty of the Earth said to the son of the Vlach, "I will set you three tasks, and if you accomplish them I will be yours."

"Agreed," said the youth.

"This is the first. I will heap up together a quantity of wheat, barley, rye, and earth, and thou must separate them in one night."

"I will separate them."

"This is the second task. Thou must go to the two mountains which open and shut, and bring me thence some of the Water of Life."[1]

"I will bring it."

"Here is the third task. I will cover myself with a veil; these eleven maidens will do the same, and if you can distinguish me among them, I will be yours."

"Very good," replied the youth.

In order to accomplish the first task, he burnt the feather which had been given to him by the ants. "Can you," he asked, "separate all these grains of wheat, barley, rye, and earth in one night?"

"Certainly," replied the ants. So our hero lay down and slept. He awoke very early in the morning, but seeing all the grains in separate heaps, he had another nap, from which he was awoke by the Beauty of the Earth, who had just got up.

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[1] The late Mr. Geldart, in the little book before referred to, translated this as "Deathless Water." I venture, however, to think that the Water of Life, the Oriental myth concerning which is related in a subsequent chapter, is here referred to. In a following story (p. 334) the hero is restored to life with a draught of "swallow's milk," also brought from a mountain which opened and shut.

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"Let me sleep," he replied, "I haven't closed my eyes all night." But in a moment she came back again to the youth, saying:

"You have accomplished the first task, now let us see about the others."

For the second task he burnt the feather given to him by the eagles, who immediately appeared. Said he, "I would go to draw Water of Life from the two mountains which open and shut, but we must be there at noon, for then only do they remain open for half an hour."

He took a bottle, and they started. Arrived near the mountain, the eagles took the youth up on their wings, and carried him in; and with his bottle filled, he returned to the Beauty of the Earth.

For the third task he burnt the feather given to him by the bees, and when they appeared, he asked them, "What shall I do to recognise the Beauty of the Earth when she is in the midst of the eleven maidens, and all are covered with a similar veil?"

"Let them be veiled," replied the Queen Bee; "I will alight on the head of the Beauty, and thou must seize and hold her fast, for if once thou let her go, even I could not find her again."

Accordingly, when the maidens entered, all veiled and dancing in a ring, the youth seized the one on whom the bee poised, and did not let her escape. So finally the Beauty was obliged to accept him for her husband.

When they arrived at the palace of the king, he gave her to the invalid, and our hero resumed his place among the servants. On the following day the

539 patient begged the king to kill the youth, and as he refused, he went himself down stairs, found our hero asleep, and slew him with his own hand. The Beauty, hearing of this, also went down, and found out from one of the servants, who was very fond of him, where his body was. She then had the dead youth carried to her own chamber, where she opened his mouth, and poured in some of the Water of Life, and he revived. Having thus "died and come to life again" he was able to tell the king who he was, and what his companion had done to him while coming from his father's house. Then, by the king's command, and in his presence, they led the pretended invalid outside the town to a place where were four trees. Having bent a branch from each, they tied him to them by his hands and feet, and the branches when let go tore him into four quarters.

Some time afterwards our hero wished to pay a visit to his father and mother. Before leaving, he gave to the queen a dress which he had bought for the Beauty of the Earth, and begged her not to give it to the latter until his return.

One day, however, when they were dancing, the Beauty refused to take part in the dance unless the dress left by her husband were given to her, Then all the maidens went together and begged the queen to give it to her. She refused, but the youngest went and took it by stealth. As soon as she had put it on, she said to the dancers:

"Farewell. Tell my husband, when he returns, that, until he has worn out three pairs of iron shoes, he need not hope to find me."

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When our hero returned, they repeated to him the words of his wife. Without losing a moment, he bought three pairs of iron shoes, and set out in search of her. On the spot at which he had arrived when the last pair was worn out he built a khan, where travellers might eat and drink without paying, and he questioned them as to what they had seen on their journeys. One said, "Not far from here I had let my water-cask fall, and it rolled to the bottom of a ravine. When I went down to find it, I saw twelve maidens bathing in a fountain." 539

At these words our hero rushed out of doors, and the traveller having described to him the spot, he approached the bathers unperceived, seized the dress of his wife, and threw it into the fire which they had kindled in order to wash their clothes. Her dress burnt, the Beauty had no means of escaping him again, for in it was contained all her magic power, and she returned with her husband to the king.

The story of the "Maiden promised to the Sun" is made up of two separate episodes, both of which have their variants in the folk-lore of the Greeks and Bulgarians. In the Greek variant[1] of the first part of the story, the maiden is stolen by a ray of sunshine which enters through the key-hole, and carries her to his master. Two hares are commissioned to take her back to her mother, who silvers the tail of the surviving one as a reward for its services. A Bul- [538 171]

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[1] Hahn, *Griechische und Albanesische Märchen*, No. 41.

539 garian ballad[1] also describes the stealing of a maiden by the Sun. Prayers addressed to Nature-powers, as to the Sun in this story, are not uncommon in Greek and Albanian folk-tales, though the name of God is occasionally substituted for or added to them.[2] The following is, however, the only instance of the Sun or other power voluntarily relinquishing his captive. In [538 171] a Greek parallel to the second part of the story, Τὸ μαχαίρι της σφαγῆς, &c., "The Knife of Slaughter,"[3] a Gipsy woman is substituted for the slave. The incident of the man transformed to stone by a spell is of frequent occurrence, as, for instance, in the story from the island of Astypaleá, Τὸ χρουσὸ ἄλογο, "The Golden Horse,"[4] and in the Gipsy story of "The King's Son and the Daughter of the Dervish."[5]

The Maiden who was Promised to the Sun.[6]

There was, and there was not.[7] There was once a queen who had no child, and she prayed continually the Sun to give her one, were it only a girl; when [582] she should be twelve years old,[8] she added, the Sun could have her back again.

Finally the queen had a daughter, and she went

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[1] Dozon, *Chants Bulgares*, No. xii.

[2] See, for instance, Von Hahn, *Griechische und Albanesische Märchen*, Nos. iv. v. liv. and cxli.

[3] Hahn, Νεοελληνικὰ Παραμύθια, p. 49, translated by Geldart in the little volume somewhat too ambitiously entitled *The Folk-lore of Modern Greece*.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 80.

[5] See below, p. 370.

[6] Dozon, *Contes Albanais*, No. vii.

[7] The usual preface to an Albanian folk-tale. The Magyar formula, *Volt, nem volt*, has the same meaning.

[8] The marriageable age.

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to school every day. One day, as she was on her way thither, the Sun said to her:

"Remind thy mother to give me what she promised."

The girl repeated what the Sun had said. Her mother told her to say to him, "It is still too young;" and she gave this answer to the Sun.

On her twelfth birthday, as she was going to school, the Sun carried her off to his house. The mother awaited her daughter's return, but, seeing nothing of her, she concluded that the Sun had stolen her, as he had threatened. So she had the house painted black,[1] barred the door, which she never allowed to be opened, and sat all alone, weeping and lamenting.

The Sun had at his house, among other creatures, a Koutchédra. She, scenting the maiden, said, "I smell kingly flesh."

"It is my daughter," replied the Sun; "so see that thou touch her not."

One day he sent her into the garden to cut a cabbage, and, as she was cutting it, she said to herself, "Just as this cabbage cracks, so my heart is rent at the remembrance of my mother," and she burst into tears.

The Sun, who had observed this, asked her, "What hast thou to weep for? Dost thou grieve for thy mother?"

"I am dying of grief for her," she replied.

"Well, if thou wilt go home, call the animals that they may carry thee."

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[1] See pp. 221 and 261.

539 She called several of the animals, and the Sun, on his side, sent for the Koutchédra, and said to her, "If thou bearest this maiden, and art hungry on the way, what wilt thou eat?"

"Herself."

"If thou art thirsty, what wilt thou drink?"

"Her blood."

Seeing that the Koutchédra was not be depended upon, the Sun told the maiden to call another animal. She called the Stag.

The Sun asked him, "Wilt thou carry this maiden home?"

"Willingly."

"If thou art hungry on the way, what wilt thou eat?"

"The green grass."

"If thou art thirsty, what wilt thou drink?"

"The cool water; only when we arrive her mother must give me three *okas* of hay."

The Stag took the maiden and placed her on his horns. As they went, he was hungry, and said to her, "Climb on this tree, and if any one passing asks you to come down, be sure not to do so before I return." So the girl climbed up the tree.

Presently there came by a Koutchédra, who, looking this way and that, perceived the maiden, and begged her to come down, so that they might gossip together.

"I shall not come down; I'm afraid you'd eat me."

"I won't eat you."

"Well, go home, and come back later."

The Koutchédra went off, and when the maiden

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saw the Stag coming back, she cried, "Make haste, for there is a Koutchédra coming to eat me."

She mounted again on the horns of the Stag, who set off at a gallop, and to every one they met he said, "If you meet a Koutchédra, don't betray us, but tell her that the Stag and the maiden have taken another road."

Arrived at the house of the queen, they knocked at the door, but no one answered. Then, while still knocking, the girl cried, "Open, *Néné!* (mother). It is thy daughter!"

At last the mother opened, and, seeing her daughter, was beside herself with joy.

The maidens of the quarter, hearing of her return, came to the queen and said, "Let her come with us, to walk about and amuse herself," and the queen allowed her. They went together towards a garden, and this garden had a big gate, which they could not open. But hardly had the queen's daughter touched it than it opened wide, and drew her in, closing again upon her immediately. Her companions waited for her, but seeing that the gate did not re-open, they returned in great distress to relate to her mother what had happened. And the mother became as desolate as before.

The maiden meanwhile walked about the garden, where she found men and animals all turned to stone. Among them there was a king, who held in his hand a paper on which she read as follows:

"The woman who is able to pass three days, three nights, and three weeks without sleeping, will I wed, for then shall I come again to life."

539 So she began to abstain from sleep, taking books and reading them. The three days, three nights, and two of the weeks had already passed when there came by a man selling slaves. She put her head out of the window[1] and asked him how much he wanted for a female slave.

"Whatever you please to give me," was the reply.

So she threw to the merchant a handful of sequins, let down a cord, and the slave fastening herself to it, she drew her up. She then said to her:

"Thou must watch for two or three nights, so that I may sleep a little, for it is long since I closed my eyes, because of the promise contained in the paper which the king holds; but thou must awaken me when the king comes to life. So after relating to her at length what was written in the paper, she laid down and slept. But the slave hastened to take off her clothes and put them on herself, so that when the king should come to life, he might marry her instead.

The three weeks passed, the king came to life.

"Who art thou?" he asked of the slave.

"I am she who has for three days, three nights, and three weeks remained without sleep," she replied; and he married her. He then asked who was the woman who lay sleeping there.

"It is a slave whom I bought because I was all alone."

When the maiden woke up, the king said to his wife, "What shall we do with this slave?"

"Send me to keep the geese," replied the princess,

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[1] Probably of the *koula*, or tower, built at one of the angles of the garden wall.

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who had heard him. So they built a hut for her to live in. But she did nothing but weep and recount her misfortunes. The king having heard her once or twice lamenting in this way, approached and asked her why she wept; so the maiden told him her story. Then the king took her for his wife, and as for the slave, he cut her into a thousand pieces, the biggest of which was not larger than that! 539

The following story strikingly illustrates the fatalistic beliefs entertained by the Albanians in common with the generality of Orientals. The incident of the substituted letter is of common occurrence in Greek as well as Albanian folk-tale.[1] [829] [538]

The Story of the Child; or, The Fates.[2]

There was once an old man and an old woman who had no children. At last, after I don't know how many years, God gave them a son, and their joy had no bounds when they found that the Lord had at length thus remembered them. Two nights had passed since it was born, and the third was coming on when the Three Women would appear to assign to the infant its destiny.[3]

The same night it rained so heavily that no one dared put his nose out of doors for fear of being carried off by the water and drowned. However, who should arrive in the midst of the rain but a Pasha,

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[1] See, for instance, "The Three Brothers and the Dev," p. 156; Dozon's "La Boite Merveilleuse," *Manuel, &c.*, No. xviii., *Contes*, No. xl.; and Hahn's Tinote story of "Kosta and the Drakos," in the *Νεοελληνικὰ Παραμύθια*.

[2] Dozon, *Langue Chkipe*, No. xx.; *Contes Albanais*, No. xiii.

[3] See p. 244.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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539 who asked the old man for shelter. The latter, seeing that he was a man of importance, made him welcome, led him to the hearth, made up a great fire, and gave him to eat of the best he had. He then piled up in the corner a number of things so as to make room for the Pasha's horse, for part of the house was roofless.

The Pasha, warmed and fed, had now nothing to do but sleep. But how could he sleep when he had on his person I don't know how many thousands of piastres?

That night, as we have said, the Three Women were expected to determine the child's destiny. Well, they came, and sat down by the fire. The Pasha, when he saw them, was horribly frightened, but he kept quiet, and made no noise whatever.

Let us leave the Pasha, and attend to the Women.

The first said: "This child will not live long; he will die young."

The second said: "This child will live long, but he will die by the hand of his father."

Then the third said: "My sisters, what are you saying?—This child will live long enough to kill the Pasha here, to strip him of his power, and to marry his daughter."

Now, what the last had said must come to pass. They remained but a moment longer, and then disappeared.

The Pasha, who had heard everything, shivered with terror. He couldn't sleep a wink all night, and only thought of finding means of killing the baby. Next morning he said to the old man:

"I also am childless; wilt thou not give me thy child? I will pay thee what thou wilt."

"How could that be?" replied the old man. "We have so longed for the birth of this child; and you would take him from us. Never!"

"Yes, yes; you will let me have him," said the Pasha, and he poured out of his bag three thousand piastres, which he offered to the father. When he refused to take them, the Pasha pulled out another three thousand piastres, because he was determined to kill the child. The sight of these six thousand piastres decided the father, but not the mother, who would not consent even after the Pasha offered another three thousand piastres.

Then the old man said to his wife, "What are you thinking of, wife? We don't even know if the child will live or not. Why, then, not give him up, and take all this money in exchange? Supposing we had had no child? But at all events thou knowest that the child will be better cared for than by thee, and we can go now and then to see him." And with such words he persuaded his wife.

To make a long story short, they took the nine thousand piastres, and gave up the child in his cradle to the Pasha, who placed it on his horse before him. Then they could not help sobbing.

"Don't fret," said the Pasha, "and come to see the child whenever you please."

As he went, however, he only thought of the best way of getting rid of the child, for he couldn't find in his heart to draw his poniard and cut its head off. What did he do? As he passed by a river, he took

539 the cradle, threw it in, and then hurried off, so as not to hear the baby's cries.

The child, thought he, must have been drowned. On the contrary, however, it was saved, for on falling into the water its body went under, while its head remained above, so that it could breathe, and after being borne along by the current, it was finally left among some bushes which grew on the borders of a forest.

In this forest a herdsman kept his goats, and he was in the habit of leading them to the river every day about noon, to give them water. On this day, one of the goats, leaving the flock, went towards the baby, whose cries she heard. She placed herself over him, and put one of her teats in his mouth so that he could suck, and when he was satisfied she rejoined her companions.

When the time came to milk the goats, they saw that this goat had no milk, and the master said to the shepherd, "Why dost thou milk the goats in secret? Hast thou not enough to eat, that thou takest the milk which belongs to me?"

The poor shepherd protested with all his might that he knew not how it had happened. At last, the master said, "You stay here and work, and I will look after the goats this afternoon."

So he took the goats to graze outside the forest, and, towards sunset, as he led them to the river to drink, he saw the goat whose milk had failed leave the rest, straddle its legs, and give suck to the baby. Astonished, he went up to her, perceived the cradle with the new-born baby in it, and carried it home, acknowledging that his shepherd was not to blame. 539

It was not long before it was discovered to whom the child belonged, and the finder gave him up to the old man (who lived in the same village), so that he might take care of him and let him have him again when he was grown up.

To be brief, this is what happened. The boy, brought back by the old man to the flockmaster who had found him, showed himself so intelligent and so wise that he excelled all the other servants of this man, and was put over them.

One day the Pasha came to this village, of which he was the lord, and he lodged in the house where the young man lived. The latter, almost from the first day, pleased him and won his heart by his beauty, his modesty, and all his other good qualities.

On one occasion, the Pasha was praising the youth to the peasant, who said, "If you knew his story, you would be surprised in another way," and he told him all about it from beginning to end. What was the consternation of the Pasha when he discovered by this history that it was the child he had thrown into the river.

So what does he do? He hits upon another way of getting rid of him, and with that end he writes a letter to his wife, in which he says, "Order the bearer of this letter to be put to death, and when he is killed let them fire a salute, so that I may know and be glad."

The letter ready, he tells to the peasant that he wants a trusty man to take it to his wife.

539 "Your lordship," replied the villager, "knows that I have no one more trustworthy than the young man of whom we spoke."

"Precisely. I had him in my mind. Let him take my horse, and let him come to me for the letter."

The youth took it, mounted the horse, and set out. On the road he was thirsty, and having found a spring, he dismounted from the horse, drank his fill, and lay down to take a nap. While he slept, a negro appeared, took the letter out of his bosom, and wrote another to this effect.

"The man whom I send to thee thou must receive with all honour, prepare for him a magnificent feast, and then marry him to our daughter. At the moment the wedding crowns are placed on their [585] heads[1] let a salute be fired, so that I may hear and take part in the rejoicings."

The letter finished, the negro folded and sealed it as the other had been, and then placed it in the bosom of the youth, who was not long in waking. Unconscious of what had happened, he continued his journey, and delivered the letter forthwith to the Pasha's lady. She had no sooner read it than she began to treat him with great politeness, gave orders for a great feast, and married him to her daughter, while salutes were fired by the gunners. The Pasha, hearing in the village the sound of the guns, concluded that the youth was dead. "At last I have got rid of him," he said to himself. So you may imagine what was his dismay when, on his return home several days afterwards, he saw him alive, and especially on finding him married to his daughter.

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[1] "Placing the crowns," being a part of the Christian marriage ceremony, is somewhat out of place in the wedding of a Pasha's daughter.

So again he cudgels his brain to find a means of doing away with him. After thinking some time, he said to a certain blacksmith:

"To-morrow I will send a youth for such and such a thing. Tell him to wait till thou hast made it; then, take thy big hammer and give him two or three blows with it, so that he die. That done, cut off his head, put it in a handkerchief, and give it to another youth whom I will send."

In the evening, having called his son-in-law, he said to him, "To-morrow thou must get up very early, and go to such and such a blacksmith, who will give thee something which I have ordered."

"I will not fail," replied the young man, and he went to bed. At daybreak he rose to go to the blacksmith, when his wife said it was too early, and persuaded him to lie down and go to sleep again. The Pasha, however, having also awoke, called his son and asked him if his brother-in-law had gone out.

"I will go and see," he replied, and he went to the apartments of his brother-in-law, whom he awoke, asking him if he had yet been to the blacksmith's.

"No," he said, "but I will go immediately."

But the Pasha's son thought to himself that, instead of waiting till his brother-in-law was dressed, it was better to go himself, so he went. Seeing him in the distance, the blacksmith took his big hammer, and with one blow he killed him; and, after cutting off his head, he tied it up in a handkerchief. Soon after-

539 wards the Pasha's son-in-law arrived to fetch the article ordered. The blacksmith gave him the handkerchief, which he carried to his father-in-law.

When the Pasha saw him alive before his eyes, he trembled in every limb; but what was his grief when, on opening the handkerchief, he found the head of his son! However, he made no sign, but gave this order to his groom—"To-night, if the horses fight, leave them alone, so that my son-in-law may go down and quiet them. Do thou, however, be behind the door, with a bludgeon in thy hand, and the moment he appears, smash his skull."

"Very well," was the reply.

During the night, the horses having begun to fight, the Pasha called to his son-in-law to go and quiet them, but his wife persuaded him not to get up, saying that they would soon stop. The Pasha, who thought that this time he was really dead, went out of his room and crept softly towards the stable. The groom thought it was the son-in-law coming, and with one blow struck him dead.

Then the youth took the power into his own hands, and became Pasha in place of the other. And so it all fell out as the Third Woman had foretold, at the time of his birth, that he should supplant the Pasha.

Our story is done. The youth was lucky, and may we be luckier still!

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The following story of The Three Brothers and the Three Sisters has many parallels in Greek folk-tale. In an Epirote variant the sisters are married respect-

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ively to a lion, a tiger, and an eagle,[1] and in the 538
others we have besides the "Mother of Night," the 171
Mother of the Sun, of the Moon, and of the Wind,
who protect the princess against their own sons.[2]

The Three Brothers and the Three Sisters.[3]

There were, and there were not. There were once 539
three brothers who had three sisters, and they married
them, and gave the first to the Sun, the second to the
Moon, and the third to the South Wind.[4]

Some time afterwards, I don't know how long, the brothers said to each other, "Let us go to our sisters and see how they fare." So without wasting time they made ready for the journey, took their provisions, and set off. As they were going the night overtook them when they were on a plain near a mountain. So they stopped there, took out their provisions, and made a fire. Supper finished, the eldest of the brothers said to the others:

"Lie down and sleep, and I will watch and keep guard for fear that some one might come to rob or kill us."

So the two younger ones slept, and he mounted guard. Presently a Koutchédra, seeing the light, came up, and, her mouth watering at the sight of the men, she threw herself upon the one who was watching, to eat him. But he with a shot from

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[1] Hahn, Νεοελληνικὰ Παραμύθια; No. 12, *Gr. und Alb. Märchen*, No. 25.

[2] *Ibid.* No. 10.

[3] Dozon, *Langue Chkipe*, No. xxiv., *Contes Albanais*, No. xv.

[4] *Youga.* In Albanian, as in Servian and Bulgarian, the moon and the south are masculine, and from this circumstance M. Dozon was of opinion that this story is of Slav origin. [821]

539 his gun stretched her dead on the ground. Then, drawing his poniard, he cut off her head, which he hid in his bag, after throwing her body into a ditch so that his brothers might not see it. He then resumed his watch. After some time he awoke them, and all three continued their journey.

On the second night they found themselves in another place. After having lighted a fire and supped, two of the brothers lay down, guarded by the second, who, as soon as a Koutchédra came up killed her, as his brother had done.

The third night, the youngest said to the others, "Go to sleep; it is now my turn to watch."

"No," they replied, "thou art too young; one of us must do that duty."

However, he would not consent, and so it was he who kept watch that night, and was, in his turn, attacked by a Koutchédra. As he was but young, he fired too soon, and when, having drawn his dagger, he threw himself on the Koutchédra in order to finish her, she, in a convulsion of pain, put out the light with a stroke of her tail. How was he to kindle it again; for he had not the materials? A fire happened to be burning on the top of the mountain, so he went towards it.

On the way he met the Mother of the Night, and asked her where she was going.

"I am going to make the day," she replied.

"Wait," he said, "until I have got a light."

"Very well, I will wait." But as he did not trust her word, he bound her so that she could not make the day.

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When he came near the fire, he saw upon it an enormous cauldron with twelve handles. He lifted it up, and lighted his torch. By chance the brigands, to whom it belonged, arrived at that moment, and asked him who he was.

"A traveller," he replied. "My light had gone out, and I came here to re-light it."

"But how," they asked again, "did you manage to lift the cauldron? The twelve of us, when we want to take it off the fire, take hold of a handle each, and it is as much as we can do to lift it."

"I didn't find it very heavy," replied the youth, and he lifted it again.

"You must be the most valiant of men," said the brigands, "and you are the man to help us to rob the king."

So they set off, all the thirteen, to rob the king. Having made a hole in the wall, they entered the stable in order to steal the horses, and the boy remained outside. Left alone, he began to reflect.

"Until now," he said to himself, "I have never committed the smallest theft. There is but one thing to do—kill these men and run away." So he began to shout, "Quick! save yourselves; we are discovered!"

The robbers came out as fast as they could, but as each one appeared he cut off his head. After having thus killed every one, he entered the lower court, and stuck his poniard in the ground. Then, having relighted his torch, he unbound the Mother of the Night, and, returning to his brothers, they set out again together.

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539 But let us leave them and go back to the king. When he arose, the sight of the twelve corpses and the dagger in the middle of the court astonished him greatly. Then he gave orders that a *khan* should be built at the cross roads, where every traveller would be lodged and fed gratis on condition of his relating all that he had done in his life, whether good or evil. This order was obeyed. Many people came to the *khan*, and lodged and slept without paying a *para*.

Chance willed it that the brothers too came and stopped at the *khan*. In the morning, as they were going away, they asked the *khandji* (innkeeper) how much was to pay. He replied, "Here we take no money; we only require every man to tell the story of his life, whether good or bad."

So the eldest told the story of what he had done, and among other things how he had killed a Koutchédra, and the second the same. But when it was the turn of the third, and he came to the adventure with the Koutchédra, and the robbers he had killed when they were in the act of robbing the king, the *khandji* cried, "Thou art the man whom the king seeks."

The two eldest brothers went their way, and we don't know what became of them. As for the youngest, the king, having heard his story, gave him his daughter in marriage, and made him the first person in the kingdom.

In that country it was customary, on the occasion of a royal wedding, to set at liberty several prisoners. Among the people then in prison was one half iron and half man, who had not been set free with the others, and who cried and complained continually. Moved with compassion, the bridegroom begged the king to set him also at liberty. He was, however, condemned for life, and the bridegroom had to beg very hard before he would give orders to strike off his fetters. At the moment they were taken off the king's daughter was close by, and in a moment he had seized her and swallowed her, after which he instantly disappeared.

Horrified at this misfortune, the king drew his sword to kill his son-in-law. But he said, "I can find her again and bring her back, only you must give me a pair of iron shoes and an iron staff (because he had to undertake a terribly long journey), and I promise before the year is out to return with your daughter." And when the king had had made for him the things he required, he set out.

That evening he went straight to his sister, who had married the Sun.

"Who is there?" she asked, when he knocked at the door.

"So and so," he replied. The sister opened the door, and great was her joy on seeing her brother. But directly afterwards the Sun came, and, fearing that he might devour the new arrival, she pushed him into a chest. Hardly had the Sun entered than he asked, "What is there for supper?"

"Whatever there may be," was the reply.

"I smell fresh meat," said the Sun.

"No, you are mistaken; there is no flesh here," she replied again. But seeing that he began to look about for it, she added, "It were better for thee to

539 eat me than to eat my brother, who came in just before thee."

"Let him show himself, and I will not hurt him."

So he came out of his hiding-place, and on seeing his brother-in-law the Sun shared the joy of his wife. He asked them if by chance they knew where Half-man-half-iron lived.

"No," they replied, "we know nothing about him; go and ask the Moon."

To make a long story short, the next evening he arrived at the house of his sister who had married the Moon; but they could tell him nothing, and so he went on to see the third, the wife of the South Wind. When he asked her the same question, she replied, "I don't know. But to-morrow, before daybreak, take that road which you see up there, and in such and such a place you will find a falcon so big that he cannot fly. Come up to him very softly from behind, seize him by the head, and say to him, 'I will kill thee if thou tell me not where Half-man-half-iron lives.' Then when he has told thee that, and also what thou must do, set out to seek him."

Accordingly, at daybreak, he mastered the falcon, who said, "I know where he is, but thou must give me so many *okas* of meat and then wait till my wings be grown, because I am old."

So he waited till the falcon's wings were grown, and collected a supply of meat to feed him with while he was flying, for the place they were going to was a mountain so high, so high, that no man had ever climbed it. They called it "The Other World," and it was there that Half-man-half-iron lived with the king's daughter. 539

At last he bestrode the falcon, placed before him the meat, and the bird began its flight. As they ascended, the youth gave him from time to time pieces of meat, but presently the supply was exhausted, and he had no more to put in his beak.

"I want meat," said the falcon.

"I have no more; it is all finished."

"You must give me meat, or I shall let you fall."

At his wits' end, the young man cut off a piece from his thigh and gave it to him, and then, as he still clamoured for more, from the other thigh. Arrived at the summit, the falcon, seeing his rider all bloody, vomited the pieces of flesh which he had swallowed, and the young man, on putting them back in their places, found his wounds healed.

Close to the spot on which they had alighted was a palace; he knocked at the door, and it was his wife, the king's daughter, who opened it. She knew him at once, and cried in her joy, "It is thou, my husband! How hast thou come hither, and who has carried thee?"

He told her of all his adventures, and while they were talking Half-man-half-iron came home. Fearing for her husband's life, she took him up to the loft and hid him there. He came in and asked:

"What is there for supper?"

"What there may be."

"I smell fresh meat," and as he said this, he chanced to see through a hole the man in the loft. In a second

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539 he had caught hold of him, and drunk his blood. As for his skin and bones, he threw them out of doors.

The falcon saw these remains, and said:

"That is the young man whom I brought here. Let us be quick and fetch some swallow's milk so as to bring him back to life." And without loss of time he spread his wings, and sailed off towards two mountains which opened and shut, for it was there that swallows' milk was to be found. He arrived, filled his mouth, and returned as fast as he could. Hardly had the milk touched the lips of the youth than he came back to life. Entering the house, he said to his wife: "Pretend to be ill, and then say to Half-man-half-iron: 'We have lived so long together, and you have never yet revealed to me where your strength lies. I am going to die, so you need not fear to tell me.' Then he will tell you." Then the youth went away to sleep, for fear of being eaten up a second time.

So the king's daughter pretended to be ill, and questioned Half-man-half-iron as to where his strength lay. "In the broom," he replied.

When he had gone out she burnt the broom, but to no purpose, for his strength was not affected. Again she pretended to be ill, and pressed him with questions. Then he said: "My strength is in a wild boar which lives on such and such a mountain. It has a silver tusk; in this tusk is a hare, the hare has in its inside three pigeons, and in them resides my strength." This said, he went about his business. The princess went out, called her husband, and repeated to him what she had learnt. Without losing a moment, he set out for the mountain, where, finding a shepherd tending his sheep, he asked him where the great boar had his lair.

"Don't speak so loud," said the shepherd, "or he will hear you and come and devour us." But he made still more noise, so that at last the boar came up and rushed upon him, but he drew his dagger and defended himself bravely. While they were fighting thus, the boar cried:

"If I had only a root to sharpen my tusks with, thou would see!"

"And I," retorted the young man, "if I had only a cake of fine flour, some fried fish, and a jar of wine, *thou* would see too!"

In a moment the shepherd had brought what they mentioned. After they both had eaten, the boar his root, and the youth his cake of fine bread and fried fish, the fight began again, and continued till the youth had slain the boar. He looked at his tusks, saw that one was of gold and silver, and, having split it, he found inside a hare, and, having opened its stomach, he found inside three pigeons.

Let us now return to Half-man-half-iron. Hardly had the boar expired, than he felt bad; when the hare had been opened he felt worse, and could hardly stand. Then the youth cut the throats of two of the pigeons which he had found, and, holding the third in his hand, he returned to the house of Half-man-half-iron. The latter, when he saw him, tried to rise, but could not; and when the young man killed the last pigeon, he died on the spot.

The youth took his wife, mounted with her on the falcon's back, and descended from the mountain. They

539 returned to the king, who, on seeing them, was quite overjoyed, and gave a splendid feast in their honour.

This is the end of the story.

[538] The following comic story is a good illustration of the adage, "Set a thief to catch a thief."

Mosko and Tosko.

There were once two brothers, who were robbers by trade, and they had a sister for whom they had long sought a husband of their own quality. Years passed, and one fine day they met on the road a man whom they asked, "Where goest thou? Wilt thou join us, and have our sister for thy wife? We will give her to thee, for we have long wanted a husband for her."

"Done," said the other, "and that shall not prevent our being comrades." So they gave him their sister.

One day, as they had not seen their sister for some time, Mosko and Tosko went to pay her a visit. The husband happened to be absent, having gone to the mill. You must know, however, that there was some
[251] *pastourma*[1] hanging in the loft.[2] Arrived in the house, Mosko said to his sister: "My dear sister, give me some water." She went to fetch the water-barrel, and gave it to him. After having drunk, Mosko asked Tosko if he were not likewise thirsty. "Yes," he replied, and his brother passed him the barrel. Then Mosko said to Tosko:

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[1] Smoke-dried meat.

[342] [2] *Tarasa*, the space between the unceiled rafters of a cottage and the roof.

"Hast thou seen it?"

"Yes."

"Hast thou seen it?" he asked again.

"Yes."

"Hast thou seen it?" he asked a third time.

"Yes," and this said, they left.

When the husband came home, he asked his wife if any one had been there.

"My brothers," she replied, "have been; it was long since I had seen them."

"Did they ask anything of thee?"

"They asked for some water to drink."

"Didst thou give them some?"

"I did."

"Did they both drink?"

"They did, and, while they drank, they said to each other, 'Hast thou seen it?' 'Yes.'"

"Nothing more?"

"They said nothing more."

The evening had now come, and the couple went to bed. During the night the two brothers returned. Mosko, standing at the door, imitated the mewing of a cat, while Tosko entered the house. The husband, hearing the voice of a cat, asked his wife where the *pastourma* was.

"In the loft," she replied.

Tosko, hearing this, climbed up hastily into the loft, seized the meat, and both made off. The husband, however, got up to see if the meat was in its place, and, finding it gone, he went in pursuit of the brothers. He overtook Tosko, to whom Mosko, tired of carrying the *pastourma*, had given it.

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"Thou must be tired," he said to his brother-in-law; "give me the meat and I will carry it," and Tosko, thinking it was his brother, gave up the *pastourma*. Soon afterwards, Tosko, coming up with Mosko, asked him where the meat was.

"But thou hast it," he replied. "Hast thou forgotten that thou asked me for it, and I did give it to thee?"

"You gave me nothing of the kind," returned Tosko. Soon, however, it dawned upon him that this had been a trick of the husband's.

"Wait here for me," he said to his brother, "and I will bring it back." So he made haste, and got first to his sister's house. When the husband arrived, Tosko feigned to be his wife, and mimicked so well that the man gave the *pastourma* into his hands.

Having rejoined Mosko, they sat down together, and prepared to cook the meat. But the husband, who soon found out the trick that had been played him, went again in search of them, and finding them in the act of cooking their booty, what does he do? Well, there was close by a tree which had been half burnt, and with the charred wood he blackens his face till he looks like a negro, and then goes and sits opposite the couple grinning and showing his teeth. Tosko, who was turning the spit, no sooner caught sight of him than, taking him for a *lougăt*,[1] he in a fright woke his brother, who was lying asleep, and both ran off as fast as their legs could carry them.

The husband took possession of his property, and

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[1] See preceding chapter p 280.

returned home. Said he to his wife, "Go and invite 539
your brothers to dinner."

Arrived at their house, she said, "We beg you to come and dine with us," and they followed her home. They began to eat the *pastourma*, but tried in vain to chew it, for it was not cooked.

"How is this," they asked, "that you give us raw meat?"

"It is the same meat you had on the spit the other evening," replied the husband. "I have served it to you precisely as you roasted it yourselves."

"What! Was it thou who gave us such a horrible fright?"

"I myself. But let us be comrades all the same."

And comrades they were.

Though the Albanians cannot be called a musical 533
people, singing is the favourite pastime of both men [517]
and women. Their airs have little variety, being for
the most part monotonous recitatives, and the singer's
merit depends upon his success in rivalling the violin, [534]
mandolin, or flute, by which his song is accompanied,
in prolonging the last note. The songs are generally 533
long ballads, which recount the victories of the tribe, 173
the doughty deeds of ancestors, of the family, or the exploits of some national hero. For in the songs of the Skipetars the later history of the country is preserved, and in those of the Ghegs more particularly may be found the record of how they obstinately resisted, yard by yard, the Turkish advance into their mountains, and were only subdued at last by the

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533 173 overwhelming numbers and equal pertinacity of the foe. The record, too, of every insurrection, and they have been many, has thus from 1572 downwards been orally transmitted from generation to generation, keeping alive in the memory of the Albanians the heroism of their ancestors, and inciting them in their turn to similar deeds of daring.

533 538 The songs vary greatly in literary merit. Poetical talent seems now to have died out in the country, though formerly Albania had her national poets, the last of them (so far as I can ascertain), Hussein Mollah, having lived in the eighteenth century. The old ballads are consequently far superior to those of more recent date, which consist chiefly of detached couplets, and are very episodic, though they describe with sufficient accuracy the events they profess to record. In the more remote highlands some very ancient historical ballads are preserved, but unfortunately none of these have yet been collected.

One of the most striking songs of the Skipetars commemorates the revolution of 1572 under Ibrahim Pasha of Scutari. The result of this insurrection was the recognition by the Porte of its leader as Pasha of Scutari, he being the first Albanian since the conquest who had been allowed to assume that title. The song is, unfortunately, too long to give in full, but the following opening and concluding lines may give some idea of its spirit:—

539
No! no! our country only must we mother call,
For on her breast she us has nourished all.
She is the wife we to our bosoms press,
Who wakes within our hearts love's tenderness.

Where is the man, love of such mother, wife, 539
Who holds within his heart, counts not his life
As naught, as naught whatever he
May sacrifice, to keep his loved one free.

* * * * *

Come! Oh, ye generous sons, brave children, come!
And you, ye cherished husbands, hasten home.
Come to the arms of those who, with your fall,
Would have lost loved ones, country, home, and all!
Come back and rest from war's dread strife and din,
And teach your sons a hero's name to win!

The following ballad graphically describes a struggle which took place in 1795 between the Ghegs under Mahmoud Pasha of Scutari and the Tosks under Kourd Pasha of Berat. 533 173

Beat, beat, O valiant hearts of Ghegs, with noble pride! 539
The hosts of Tosks we've scattered far and wide; 173
For warrior Scutari has now at length,
With Roumeli's famed hero tried her strength.

To Hussein Mollah hear them call with glee,
"Now onward march, Tabácchi and Terzi,
Tosk has met Gheg. Come thou, our Laureate,
And make a song this fight to celebrate."

Kourd Pasha's at Berat, there let him bide;
Mean is his rank to stand Mahmoud beside;
What's he before Mahmoud Pasha, our lord?
How dares he 'gainst his master draw the sword?

Rebel is Kourd Pasha and *verlazi*,[1]
To his liege lord a traitor foul is he;
With fear he trembles when afar the drum,
Three hours[2] away, proclaims Mahmoud doth come. [805 822]

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[1] One who takes arms against his suzerain.

[2] Distance in the East is always calculated by time

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Scared at the sound, he in the tekkéh[1] hides,
His standards leaves, nor heeds what them betides;
Beard and moustache he tears with flowing tear,
And in a swoon at length he falls from fear.

Mahmoud his charger mounts, and riding out
His men before, now "Forward!" hear him shout;
"Forward with me! to-day, if Allah will,
I Kourd Pasha with my own hand will kill."

Now, like a roaring lion, where'er he goes,
With Allah's aid, in terror flee his foes;
The tekkéh of Baba Hussein before,
See how they rend from Tosks the spoils of war!

Veli escapes. Poor Tahir, from the rout
Into the mill thou fleest; there dost hold out.
It is in vain that bravely still thou fight;
How couldst thou stand against this vulture's might?

Death thee awaits, this day will be thy last,
Riddled with balls, thy troops are fleeing fast;
Long will it be before the Tosks forget
The valour of the Ghegs when last they met.

Now to his men hear Agha Rouka cry,
"Are ye then women, that from foe ye fly?
Of what avail the manly arms ye bear?
Of what avail the sabres bright ye wear?

Rally yourselves, as skirmishers in bands,
Fall on the Ghegs, and, with your curvéd brands,
Strike off their heads! Who falls the field upon
Wept is, but scorned who lives with honour gone!"

Naught heed they him, but in confusion fly.
Tosks of Berat! your sandals[2] go and tie!
Measure no more yourselves with Scutarine,
Who flees not, wields true gun, and sabre keen!

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[1] A Dervish chapel.

[2] The hide shoes, with the hairy side turned inwards, worn generally in the mountains.

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The following little Tosk song refers to an unsuccessful rising in South Albania about 1835:— 538

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From Corfu they tidings bear,
Tafilbouz is landing here;
On Avlona's shore he lands,
Three detachments he commands.

To the mosque they crowd and shout,
"Hodo, from thy house come out!"
Now may Allah be his shield,
If to them should Hodo yield!

O Hodo, O Sadik, Bekir, and Karafili!
Simon the Liap's brave sons!
'Mid the rattle of the guns,
They have fall'n, unhappy ones!
May the rest be lucky!

The national songs, as well as the folk-tales, of the land of their forefathers are also sacredly cherished by those Albanians who, as before mentioned, for centuries past have been settled in Southern Italy and Sicily. There the exploits of the heroic Scanderbeg are still celebrated, and at their feasts they sing how the hero of Croia [538]

Of hares and capons ate the flesh,
Of partridges the heads ate;

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and how

His cups and forks were all of gold,
And of fine silk his napkins.

The women, too, in their Easter dances, relate how, as he went forth to battle, Death met him on the road, and revealed to him the secrets of the Book of Destiny; how he called to him his young son, and bade him tie his horse to a cypress on the seashore, plant his 538 776

538 776 banner beside it, and on it hang his sword, stained with the blood of the Turk:

539 Within its blade Death yet shall sleep,
And, 'neath that sombre tree,
The arms of their erst dreaded foe,
Shall they now silent be?

No! When the wind shall furious blow,
And waves my flag around,
When whinnies my good charger there,
My sword makes clanking sound,

The Turk shall hear, and, tremblingly,
He'll turn, with bated breath,
With visage blanched, and hear behind
Him, swiftly following, Death.

[854 533] The Gheg mother, in her mountain home, rocks her little ones to sleep and amuses their waking hours with such lullabies as these:

I.

539 854 "*De! De!* Lambkin mine,
Where didst thou this even dine?"
"In the fields where waters flow,
'Neath the trees where cherries grow,"

"Tell me what thou there didst see?"
"Two twin birdies on a tree."
"What song did they sing to thee?"
"*Chili! Chili! Mangouli!*

I saw the old woman
'Mong corn ears all ripe;
I heard her a-playing
Upon the black pipe!"

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II.

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Oleria! Boleria!
Come and listen to my story!

A sieve my master bade me bring,
To sift the flour some cakes to make;
A faggot in the oven fling,
When they were made the cakes to bake;
That he a lady bride might take.

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Said he, "I'll do to her no ill,
Nor will I my dear wife kill;
My sheep and goats shall be her care,
And bread and nuts shall be her fare."